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EVANGELICAL BY-PATHS

Evangelical By-Paths

Studies in the Religious and Social Aspects of the Evangelical Revival of the Eighteenth Century and a Reply to its Critics

BY THE REV.

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PREFACE

This book owes its birth to the late Professor J. E. B. Mayor, President of St. John's College, Cambridge. The author, asked by him to write a sketch of the life of DAVID SIMPSON, a former member of the College and the well-known, in his day, Incumbent of Christ Church Macclesfield, found in the large number of MS. letters readily put at his disposal by the Misses Pattison (Clive, Shrewsbury) and the late Dr. Venn (President of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge) much to quicken his regard for the men and women of the Evangelical Revival.

Hence this fragmentary attempt to produce a few notes that may inspire some abler pen to deal with a subject so rich in interest. Also would he bespeak a kindly reception for his "Life of DAVID SIMPSON" in course of publication, a friend of Wesley, Rowland Hill, Lady Huntingdon and the Ryle family, and known to practically all the leading Evangelical Clergy from Grimshaw downwards, to Cowper, Lord Dartmouth, Thornton and other laymen. His special thanks are due to the Rt. Hon. Earl Ferrers for the materials of pp. 40-51; also to the Master, Sir R. F. Scott, of St. John's College, the Librarian, Mr. C. W. Previte-Orton, M.A., Editor of the English Historical Review; to the Church Missionary Society, whose former Librarian, Mr. J. Alt Porter gave valuable literary assistance; to the Wesleyan Methodist Church, the Revs. N. Curnock (the late), Dr. Simon, and J. Telford for the information about

Simpson ; the Wesleyan Historical Society (the Rev. F. F. Bretherton and Messrs. G. Stampe (the late) and A. Wallington ; the Authorities (especially Mr. E. W. Johnson, B.D.) of Cheshunt College ; the Staff of the Cambridge University Library (especially Mr. E. J. Thomas, M.A., Senior Under Librarian) and of St. John's College Library, Cambridge ; to Canon Stokes LL.D., Litt. Doc., and other friends.

The Biographical notices at the end are intended to supplement those in the body of the two books, " DAVID SIMPSON " and " EVANGELICAL BY-PATHS."

EVANGELICAL BY-PATHS

But Cristes lore, and his apostles twelve,
He taught, but first he followed it himselve.
Chaucer.

REVIVALS

England owes much to religious revivals. John Wyclif and his "poor priests"; the Renaissance; the "devout learning" of Ascham; the Reformation; the zeal of Methodism; the sterling piety of the Evangelical Revival; all bore the fruit of social progress and left their mark in moulding the national character.

A PARABLE

At the French town of Lyons may be seen two rivers, the Rhone and the Saone, which there flow into the sea. They are totally different from one another. The former is swift, impetuous and precipitate: the latter slow, but peaceful. This may serve as a parable of the two great Revivals, the Methodist and the Evangelical. The former chafed at ecclesiastical trammels and limitations: the latter submitted to parochial lines, if allowed a certain amount of elasticity. The Methodist resembled a torrential shower: the Evangelical a gently fertilising rain. The result in the one case, far from the original intention of Wesley, was a

vast organisation with Briareus-like ramifications: in the other a permanent Church revival, the effect of which was manifest in many beneficial reforms.

"We must judge religious movements, not by the men who make them, but by the men they make."

The Evangelical Movement did not begin so soon; the conversion of Grimshaw, the pioneer, took place in 1739, that of John Wesley a few months earlier. It moved on parallel lines, with a certain amount of intermixture. All Methodists would call themselves Evangelicals; not a very large number of Evangelicals would claim to be Methodists in the strictest sense of the word. Wesley never claimed that the Revival was in any way due to himself. Nor can it fairly be said that its spread was owing to the adaptation of his methods, except so far as he adopted them from the common heritage of ancient or modern Church sources, (the Love feast e.g. was taken from the primitive Church of Carthage). Walker's classes and Wesley's Bands alike had the same origin.

If it be alleged that the Evangelical Movement was in any of its aspects a mere extension of the Methodist from the lower to the upper classes—or that it attracted not the poor but the rich—it can be replied that such an assertion did not hold good of Simpson, or of several of the other Northern clergy, Milner especially. Their ministry was much appreciated by the working classes.

A popular error, also, needs correction; that the Evangelicals were more or less indebted to Wesley's teaching and influence, and that they gratefully admitted it. To put it in different words, that the two Wesleys were the leaders of the Evangelical Revival. Such, certainly was not the case, as can be easily proved from the admissions of Wesley himself, far too honest a man to claim what he had no right to, e.g. in the

case of Grimshaw, who may be called " The Father of the Revival." The Methodists were descendants of the old Anglicanism of Nelson and others : the Evangelicals of the Puritans.

THE SAME SPIRIT

It is of interest to trace the ways in which some of the Evangelicals first saw the light, specially the part that books, e.g. Law's " Serious Call " of which Southey says " no books have ever made so many religious enthusiasts," played in their conversion.[1] Our list shall begin with John Wesley who afterwards engaged in a literary encounter with its author, as he came, in later life, to regard Law as imperfect in doctrine with regard to the Atonement. " What," says Venn, too, " does Mr. Law thus degrade the death of Christ, then farewell such a guide ![2] Henceforth I will call no man master." Adam (Wintringham) who also owed much to the book, wrote of it as that of a mystic who had dropped CHRIST at the threshold of the Temple ! These critics rightly felt themselves without a guide in its pages as to how the doctrine of the Evangel could be applied to the souls of men.

Other writings were much blessed to individual seekers: to Thomas Hervey (Underbarrow) his namesake's " works," to Joseph Milner the study of Luther on Galatians, to Grimshaw Owen on Justification, helped by a sermon by Seagrave on Gal. iii. 24—" The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ," and by a letter " published to the people of England."

The ways of GOD in leading His people unto Himself are many and diverse. Some were taught, as was Crosse, to fear Him from their youth. Many owed their

[1] Wesley, p. 48 (1820). [2] Life, p. 20

first impressions to the sacred memory of a mother, as Richard Cecil, Joseph Milner and Timothy Priestley, the brother of the well-known Unitarian. Josiah Pratt was brought to Christ by hearing Cecil read a passage from the Liturgy: Newton at sea; Scott, finally, in his own study; Dykes, as a young man on his sick bed: Toplady through a sermon preached by a layman in an Irish barn: Rowland Hill by a sermon of Beveridge read to him by his brother; Eyre by a text when travelling on the Tavistock Coach. Two verses of Scripture were the means of Conyer's conversion; that of Thomas Jones of Southwark, an inward consciousness of sin. Dreams too, specially about the Day of Judgment, were frequently employed, as with Thompson of St. Ginneys. Foster overheard a prayer: Robinson was moved by the words of one of his father's workmen; Walker by the consistent life of a fellow townsman. The simple words of a hymn aroused Rose of Carshalton after a fifteen years ministry of Deism and Natural Religion. To take more instances—from the laity this time—Wilberforce's life changed by a copy of Doddridge's "Rise and Progress" lent him by a travelling companion; Hannah More deeply impressed by Newton's "Cardiphonia" and John Thornton (p. 88) by the preaching of Henry Venn.

Many no doubt owed their souls to the Wesleys or their followers; there was a goodly list, however, of those who independently found the long sought-for Object of their desires, those, e.g. who never had any communication either with Wesley or with Whitefield, nor had read a line of their publications. The well-known case of Berridge may be cited. After two years of unsuccessful preaching at Everton in Bedfordshire he heard a Voice which seemed to say "Cease from thine own works."

Among "Methodists before Methodism" must be reckoned Howell Harris, for a short time an Oxford student who, before he became friendly with the Wesleys, started his grand Welsh lay work. There was a shaking of the dry bones and a spiritual revival already at work. GOD never leaves Himself without witnesses. The darkest nights are often the harbingers of the brightest dawns.

CHURCHMANSHIP

As to their Churchmanship, they could give a good account of themselves. When attacked they could plead in self-defence their crowded churches and throngs of communicants. The Celebrations may not have been frequent enough to satisfy the standard of our modern churchmanship, though Romaine and Goode had weekly communions. The attendances were large; this, too, in the days when a Dean of St. Paul's (Tomline) could justly lament the fact that on Easter Day, (of all Sundays in the year), no more than *six* communicants were to be found in the Cathedral.[1] Many Evangelical churches were thronged, some having so many as a thousand people or more. In several cases—notably that of Pentycross—oddly enough, this was made a cause of complaint to the Bishop.

The term "Low Churchmen" had a different meaning then. It was applied to fox-hunters and worldly clergy of Whig proclivities with no particular love for the Prayer-book: nor were they noted for an observance of rubrical requirements. The Evangelical leaders insisted on the Scriptural character of the Liturgy which they loved heart and soul. Their love and attachment

[1] Carter, *English Church* (18th cent.), p. 121.

to the Church could not be gainsaid: they loved her order, doctrines and services.

To take a few instances only:—Jones of Creaton, yielding to the advice of some of the elder clergy, gave up the practice of visiting many of the members of his congregation that attended from other parishes.[1] Hannah More, closed one of her schools when she found that the Incumbent objected to it; she repudiated the charge of Methodism, "As to connection with conventicles of any kind, I never had any . . . I have never been to Lady Huntingdon's chapel at Bath, Whitefield's or Wesley's Tabernacle in London, or any country meeting-house."[2] Wilberforce too could write to a relative who consulted him as to ceasing to attend her parish Church,

"Its individual benefits are no compensation for the general evils of Dissent. The increase of Dissenters which always follows from the institution of unsteepled places of worship is highly injurious to the interests of religion in the long run."[3]

"I am a Churchman by education and conviction."[4]

Though regarding the Prayer-Book as a human composition it was in their eyes as free from faults as any such composition could well be. The words of Charles Simeon of a later date may not inaptly be taken as expressing their inmost convictions—"Never do I find myself nearer to God than I often am in the Reading-desk."[5]

A strong Wesleyan writes of Walker—"Excellent

[1] Life (Owen), p. 87.

[2] Lady Huntingdon (Tyler), p. 29.

[3] Life, vol. 1, p. 248.

[4] Jay, Autobiography, p. 302.

[5] Carter, English Church (18th Cent.), p. 81.

Christian though he was, he strongly objected to Wesley's irregularities, a devout man but a rigid Churchman, his close adherence to the Church limited his usefulness."[1]

(It may be said, however, that he had proposed to Wesley that his Societies should be handed over to the Church in parishes where there was an Evangelical ministry.)

Again, is not this saying attributed to him, "whatever good you design to do, do it in the Church."

So too, Fletcher; the seasons of his closest communion were always in his own house, or in the Church: usually in the latter. Says Venn "I never was present at any meeting where I perceived the power of godliness as amongst the congregations of our church, where the Gospel is preached."[2]

Grimshaw said that he believed "the Church of England to be the soundest, purest, most apostolical National Christian Church in the world."[3]

"How," asks he, "can I do it?" (remain in connection with the Methodists) consistent with my relation to the Church."[4]

"Stick to the Church; by all means stick to the Church, and pray for the conversion of your minister; and if you can't approve of his preaching, remember youhave the Gospel in the Prayers," was the advice given by John Riland, Venn's curate.[5]

"I have determined," says Richardson, "to live and die in the bosom of the Established Church,

[1] Stevens, Methodism, i. 340; ii. 65.

[2] Life, p. 175.

[3] Ryle, Christian Leaders, p. 130.

[4] Jackson, Charles Wesley, II., p. 189.

[5] MSS.

though she, as well as her officers, has some faults.[1]

If it be said that preaching in other parishes uninvited —a course pursued by a small minority only—formed a breach of ecclesiastical law, the answer must be that exceptional cases demanded exceptional treatment (an incumbent might often be an absentee). Grimshaw refused to do so in any chapel, and contented himself with the shelter of a barn or friendly house, more often taking his stand beneath the open sky. Berridge writes: "I cordially approve the doctrines and liturgy of the Church of England, and have cause to bless God for a Church-house to preach in, and a Church revenue to live upon.[2] Rowland's charge was "Stand by the Church by all means: you were born in the Church, stand by it even to death." Of him writes Jones (Creaton); "It will be your wisdom to grow more Churchy after the example of the venerable Rowlands (deprived of his curacy for "Methodism"), and introduce the Common Prayer Book more among your people."[3]

LOYALTY TO CHURCH AND STATE

If by loyalty he meant a cordial support of the union between Church and State—in a word, of the Establishment, as was the vogue of the day to call it—the Evangelical could honestly plead "guilty." He was at one with the most zealous defender of the existing state of things. If, again by the expression be intended a faithful allegiance to the Prayers, Articles and Homilies, the Evangelical would give the same reply. The

[1] Life (Anonymous), p. 44, (1822).

[2] Life (Whittingham) p. 516.

[3] Life (Owen), p. 119.

Liturgy was dear to him; to the Articles he always appealed: the Homilies he often read in public. Jones (Creaton) advocated the need of a larger circulation of Prayer-books amongst villages as "a barrier against errors and dissension,[1]" Simpson, the provision of literature in "all populous towns, where the Dissenters are particularly busy in their seductive arts."[2]

Mark the words of that excellent layman, William Hey, the well-known Leeds Surgeon, twice Mayor, and a Sunday School teacher—

"I think that taking a body of religious men in the Church, and another among the Dissenters, there is much more of the true spirit of Christianity in the former than in the latter—I must say that the Ministers of the Church of England in these difficult times have behaved in by far a more Christian-like manner than others.

I shall not see it, but I have no doubt some of you will live to see the Methodists separated from the Church."[3]

He loved the Church of England for the purity of its doctrine, and the spirituality of its worship. He was always sure of hearing two good sermons, one from a prophet and the other from an Evangelist; and never came empty away.

Nevertheless the admission has been made that though a "decayed party" to-day, the Evangelicals did some good in the eighteenth century. So, too, Gladstone who, owning that they were "proscribed," generously added "the Church of England at large is profoundly and vitally indebted to them for having aroused her from her slumbers and set her vigorously

[1] Life, Owen, p. 119.

[2] Strictures, p. 451.

[3] Memoir, p. 302.

about her work."[1] "They were the salt of the Church of England during the later part of the century."[2]

"Nothing could be more admirable than the pious energy . . . raising the level of religion in the mass of the people," writes one (Cornish), who adds[3] "the Church under the conduct of the High Church party had lost her hold upon the conscience of the poor." At the same time he charges "the most active among them with a "limited imagination" and "the narrow way of a moderate Calvinism."

So, too, Sydney Smith."[4]

"We shall use the general term of Methodism to designate these three classes of fanatics" (i.e. including "the Evangelical Clergymen of the Church of England"), not troubling ourselves to point out the finer shades and nicer discriminations of lunacy and treating them all as in one conspiracy against common sense and rational orthodox Christianity."

DEFAMED

With the Evangelicals, Hannah More's "calumniated School," criticism has ever been busy. As it was in the Revival's early days, so it is to-day. History repeats itself. At its rise it was taunted with "Methodism," and "Enthusiasm"; with "snobbery" and "hypocrisy." To-day it is charged with want of scholarship. The charge of "narrow-mindedness" sounds strange from the pen of a candid critic who blames William

[1] Gleanings, sec. 7.

[2] Wakeman, p. 451.

[3] Vol. I, p. 5, 19th Century.

[4] Works, I, p. 88.

Wilberforce for giving the title of "Christian Friend" to a Quaker ! ! "Their motto" writes the same, "might have been heart-religion rather than form-religion."[1] This charge Evangelicals would gladly admit. But to say that they neglected or despised forms is not true. Many of them, as now, were most particular about religious duties. Venn, one of their great leaders, fasted regularly with "much profit."[2]

Another accusation was that they were not remarkable either "for the stature of their intellect, or for the depth of their learning, or for their range of research, or for their ardour of enquiry, or for their knowledge of human nature, or for their experience of mankind. Or, again did they not show "a general benevolence towards all Protestant sects without learning to meet the attacks of Deism and liberalism. A general intellectual stupidity." But this again was too sweeping. As a body they did not lay claim to brilliant scholarship and in some cases their zeal for soul-salvation and Biblical study may have caused them to depreciate human learning, yet not a few among them could hold their own in mental attainment. To take the Cambridge men—the two Milner brothers, Joseph and Isaac, "incomparabilis" Senior Wrangler; Professors Hey, Farish, Fawcett, and Jowett: Professor Wollaston, Senior Wrangler; 2nd Wranglers; Coulthurst and Dealtry, a doughty champion, of the Bible Society, Gisborne, (6th); Robinson, (7th); King, (11th) (1784; Knight (7th). In the year 1801 appear the names of Henry Martyn, Senior Wrangler, and the Grants, Robert (3rd) and Charles (4th); afterwards Governor General of Bombay and Secretary of State for the Colonies respectively. Add Unwin and Hey (Members' Prizeman), Jerram, Thomason, and Gorham, (of the well known "Gorham

[1] Proby. p. 129. Life, p. 45.

Controversy"), and others. Of refined and cultured taste, too, was Richard Cecil; as was also William Romaine, for a short time Gresham Professor. Nor must Cowper be forgotten. It was he who set forth Evangelical truths in hymns which will never die, and did much to make verse less artificial and stiff by a graceful and melodious simplicity. Good Hebraists were also to be found among them, e.g. Romaine, Cornelius Bayley, who first inspired Adam Clarke, the great scholar, with a desire to study the language, and others.

It has been objected that they did not aim at the internal beautifying of their Churches. In this respect, however, they did but fail to rise above the spirit of the age. When a king like George III objected to paintings in St. Paul's as a popish innovation, it cannot cause surprise that a humble clergyman did not make a hobby of Church decoration. And if they could be charged with the enormity of erecting unsightly galleries, they would have replied with the pertinent question how otherwise could they accommodate the numerous congregations that to their joy, attended their ministry?

SPOTS IN THE SUN

Again:—"peculiarity of language" as one of their friends—a candid critic—styled it—"confined views,"—"a solemn lifting up of the eyes, grotesque gestures, and posturing in their religious exercises,"[1]—all these at once betrayed their identity and made them the butt of wits and profane banter.

There was also a liability not to teach the corporate communion of the Church as compared with the immense stress laid—and rightly so—on the importance of the individual soul.

[1] Foster, Essays, p. 214, etc.

Some of them even disapproved of Cowper's Translation of Homer. This attitude was naturally resented by the poet. He contended that "they judged every action of the Muse a crime."[1] "They went out of their way to censure the Latin poets" as Horace Walpole's "Holy Hannah" More puts it: their hatred of the "world" not seldom led to a contempt for the beauties of nature and art, and a disparagement of human understanding. This indictment a modern Nonconformist looks upon as proven.[2]

"The necessary external accessories of religion were neglected; the great doctrines of the efficacy of the Sacraments repudiated, while the universality of Divine grace and love was obscured by the arbitrary dogmatism of Calvin, the theologian most in repute with them. . . assumed the title of the Evangelical party. A still greater defect was the Socinian tinge which ceased not to mark all their work and to brand as worldly and unscriptural all views not cast precisely in the same mould as those which they had adopted."[3]

SOLDIER BUILDERS

It is a common impression that very little was done in the "dead" century to supply Church privileges for the increasing population. A careful examination has shown that this statement must be modified. Reference to "Ancient Parish Registers," A. M. Burke (passim) will prove that the new Churches built were not few in number. Whether in large towns, or in country villages, specially in Wales, there were not wanting earnest souls who in the teeth of much opposition from local authorities and vested interests—a

[1] Table Talk. [2] Dale, Evangelicals, p. 19. [3] Perry, vol. iii. p. 490.

factor which must be taken into account when the question of Church building is considered—did their best to supply the deficiency. Hindrances most vexatious were thrown in their way ; in some cases even ten years passed before they were allowed to proceed with their good work. In Liverpool during the last thirty years of the 18th century three new Churches were built and five opened for Service : at Sheffield two new Churches : at Manchester two. This does not include reseating of Churches, new galleries etc. In addition to new Churches many others were rebuilt.

In this movement Evangelicals played an important part, though their aim was to restore man to God rather than restore Churches. A few instances only can find a space here. Macclesfield could point to an edifice built to hold a thousand worshippers : St. James Church, Manchester, where Simpson preached every year on the Race Day, was built by Cornelius Bayley. Thomas Dykes erected a Church (St. John's) at Hull entirely at his own risk and cost : so, too, Coulthurst (Halifax), Crosse (the blind clergyman) one at Bradford ; Wilson at Slaithwaite, where he prevailed upon members of the congregation to hold Sunday Schools termed " Cottage Schools," in their houses.

CRITICS " JUDGE NOT "

Their opponents alleged that they had a propensity for rich marriages. This is exemplified in one of Simpson's letters in which he writes of some young ladies, nameless, but it is not hard to guess at their identity—who would prove suitable help-meets to a husband—one of the qualifications being a substantial dowry : But in this he simply followed a common custom which

in announcing engagement added to it the amount to be expected from the lady's side. The majority, it is certainly to be feared, would not have copied the example of Walker of Truro who declined to marry one who would otherwise have proved a suitable wife because she had £10,000.

On the other hand it may be pleaded that differences in the social scale in many cases were not allowed to count. The elder Scott always invited the barber who curled his wig to dine with himself and family on Sunday while the younger Scott, also an Evangelical Clergyman had as his regular Sunday guest, a small farmer little above a labourer in position.

Again, "Disgracefully ignorant of that very Book which they confessed to prize so much," "too much time given to the Bible at the expense of other studies"; and now "a disgraceful ignorance" of it.[1] To avoid a Scylla they had fallen into a Charybdis. But were there no Bible students among them? What about "Bible" Scott; or Bridges; or Haweis; or Bayley; or Romaine? It is admitted that the main characteristic of the party of that time was "piety in the midst of ungodliness"; but "they lacked wideness of outlook," and were "narrow-minded."[2] Yet this "bold unworldliness and vigorous independence of mind" shown by Scott in his "Force of Truth" and borne out by his life was the means of the conversion of John Henry Newman.[3] It was he who first planted deep in my mind that fundamental truth of religion (the Holy Trinity."

"A puritanical spirit" an "almost inconceivable

[1] Proby, i, 393.

[2] Proby, i. 245.

[3] History of Religious Opinions, p. 5.

self-complacency" was a very common charge levelled against them; so, too, the spread of Dissent.[1] Where awakened souls could not find the needed food in their own churches "the hungry sheep looked up and were not fed."[2] Had the clergy but taught what the Church itself did, it would not have been so. Their "Individualism" lay, no doubt, in the fact that in their eyes the salvation of the soul was paramount. To this truth everything else must yield in importance. It was their love of the individual soul which led them to take up the cause of the poor slave, the prisoner, the miserable "pauper" and the "Magdalen." It must be owned however that in their jealousy for GOD'S Word they often came in their other-worldliness to look upon secular learning with disfavour. Stern Puritanism tended to crush out a love for the beautiful in art, poetry and nature.

"OFFSCOURING OF ALL THINGS"

From its earliest days, the Revival came in for its share of opposition. From their association with Methodism its members were subjected, in many cases, to actual bodily sufferings. They were pelted with mud and stones, dragged, maybe by their hair, through the streets. Even though these excesses were at last stopped by the arm of the law persecutions of another kind, in many cases as hard to bear, were theirs.

In the time of the Jacobites, when the fears of the Pretender's invasion were rife, they were the objects of contumely. To be an Evangelical was in the eyes of an indiscriminating world to be a "Methodist";

[1] Wakeman, p. 446. [2] Milton, Lycidas.

and for " Methodism " very few had a civil word. Even with those who surely ought to have known better the Evangelical and his Methodist brother ranked with the Pope and the Pretender : sometimes even with the Devil himself. He was socially ostracized.

" Even common civilities," says Sir Gilbert Scott, " were so rare, that I recollect the pleasure which my Father expressed when meeting with any,[1]"

FAINT YET PURSUING

These were days when Romaine could have been seen preaching by the glimmer of a taper in St. Dunstan's, Fleet Street, the Wardens having refused any lights for service on a winter's night until compelled by the Court of King's Bench to provide them.

Or Richardson a young man, standing in the Cathedral pulpit at York, or in the parish church of St. Michael-le-Belfry, knowing that he was an object of scorn and branded as a Calvinist and a Methodist (he preached only what the Bible and the Prayer-Book taught). Did he not expressly disclaim any preference for a separate system ? " I never had any connection with the Methodists either at Kirby-Moorside or York, more than with my other parishioners.[2] " One of the Residentiaries," says Wesley, " sent for Mr. Williamson who had invited me to preach in his Church and told him ' Sir, I abhor persecution, but if you let Mr. Wesley preach for you it will be the worse for you.'[3] He desired it, nevertheless, but I declined." Success in drawing

[1] Recollections p: 11:

[2] Life, p. 19.

[3] Curnock, iv, p. 120, Wesley.

a large congregation was made a pretext for the preacher's removal. Pentycross was cited before his Bishop on the charge of "overcrowding his church." Thomas Jones was refused permission to deliver sermons at St. Saviour's, Southwark, because his congregation was too large. An earnest Gospel-preacher, humble-minded, single-hearted, he passed away at the early age of thirty-three.

Patrick was dismissed from his post as Chaplain of Morden College, Blackheath, an institution in active existence to-day for the benefit of poor retired London tradesmen, the charge against him being that his sermons dealt almost entirely with faith and grace and such controversial points[1]—a preacher whose eloquence drew crowded congregations in various spheres of work for some thirty years.

There was the danger, too, of being charged with holding an illegal conventicle under the Act by which an offender was liable to penalties if found in a house at a meeting, the attendance at which was more than five exclusive of the family. The plea of the use of the Church prayers was of no avail. When Williamson, a Canon of York, went in his robes to hear Wesley preach at his meeting-house, he was suspended for a breach of the Conventicle Act; when, however, the Cathedral Court was held he was acquitted. "Parson-baiting" was not uncommon. An instance is afforded in the case of Joseph Milner, "that stupid beast"[2] of Macaulay, styled also by Gibbon as a "Methodist not worthy to be put in the same class" as the more respectable Priestley.[3] At one time one of the most popular men at Hull as clergyman, master, and boon companion,

[1] Middelton Memoirs, p. 357.

[2] Life, Trevelyan, Letter of Oct. 9, 1850.

[3] Works, p. 231.

in 1770 he changed his views, and became the subject of bitter persecution. For over seven years scarce one of the upper classes would look at him.

Another critic, while charging him with adopting "a principle singularly characteristic of the party . . . choosing only such facts as were pleasing to him, owns "the work is well written (his Church History), shows considerable scholarship, and is very fair."

The working people thronged his Church, but his preaching was boycotted by the well-to-do. In the long run his consistent life won its way. When his twenty-seven years' ministry had come to its end, and he died prematurely old, his loss was mourned by the whole town.

Moses Brown, a protégé of Lady Huntingdon afterwards Chaplain of Morden College, was refused ordination by Bishop Hoadley in spite of her letter on his behalf. Dykes did not dare to approach his Bishop with a testimonial signed by Milner. Glascott, one of her preachers, was only instituted after swearing that he would never preach out of his own parish. Matthew Powley was refused College preferment. Miles Atkinson was taken to task by the Master of Peter house, Cambridge, in the words: "I intended to have given you considerable preferment, but now can do nothing for you." . . . "My Lord," was his reply, "I would not renounce my present principles for a thousand worlds." Benson, the Wesleyan scholar and commentator, was treated in the same way.[1]

How did they fare at the hands of the Bishops?

It is needless to say that no Evangelical had attained to that dignity. In fact, it was not until the next century (1815) that they could claim a representative in Ryder

[1] *Methodist Magazine*, 1834, p. 889.

of Gloucester. As a rule, if no active opposition was shewn, there was cold disdain. If they did not inhibit they could boycott. Dr. Willes of Bath and Wells, who ordained Rowland Hill, was a notable exception : he espoused the cause of Rouquet when driven from the Gloucester Diocese by Bishop Warburton.

A friendly Cambridge incumbent was afraid to ask Venn to his house : to find a College willing to accept his son was a hard matter.

The Evangelicals had good cause for the sore feelings aroused by the unfair treatment at the hands of some of the bishops. A case in point is that of Andrews of Stinchcombe, who was compelled to give full services by Bishop Warburton, an ecclesiastical porcupine, whose foibles exposed him to the sarcastic dictum of Bentley, " a man of monstrous appetite but poor digestion," a redoubtable champion of orthodoxy, and, needless to say, a strong opponent of anything that savoured of Methodism. The bishop, in exhorting Andrews to constant residence, wrote : " . . . not so much for the good you are likely to do there, but to prevent the mischief you may do by rambling about in other places." He signed himself " Your bishop and, though your fanatic conduct almost made me ashamed to own it, ' Patron.' " To quote from a further letter : " If I indulged you in giving your parish only one service on a Sunday I hereby revoke that indulgence and insist on your giving them full service."

The bishop's action brought Lady Huntingdon into the field (Andrews had preached in one of her chapels); her well-intended interference only made matters worse. " Madam," replied the bishop, " Mr. Andrews is under my jurisdiction, and I am resolved to keep him and his fanatic conduct within his own parish." It should be borne in mind that there had been residence for two

years and nine months out of the three years since Mr. Andrews had been appointed. The omission of one service a Sunday had been sanctioned owing to ill health; the vicar had frequently taken two. It will be seen how unfair was his treatment, especially as the bishop winked at non-residence of many richer Clergy (Stinchcombe was worth £36 a year only). The upshot was that the Bishop was furious, her Ladyship was ruffled and the Archbishop gave him a better living.[1] Bishop Tomline objected to consecrate the Chapel of Ease at Gawcott, until the founder, West, sent a message that if he still refused, it would be handed over to the Dissenters. The Richardson family had to wait many years for the Consecration of the Chapel of Ease which they had built at their own expense at Bierley.

From this fear of the bishops, many patrons refused to present; some Incumbents, too, declined to read in Church the "Si Quis" of intending candidates for Holy Orders. Haweis, when a curate of a church at Oxford, was inhibited from preaching. Later, he was refused Priest's Orders by Bishop Lavington though his credentials had been signed by clergy of the highest respectability, friends of the saintly Walker. But he was supposed to hold the doctrine of "faith without works," which was quite sufficient to hinder his advancement. Rouquet, "one of the most successful preachers of the day," was dismissed from his curacy for preaching in private houses in his Parish, and for ministering to the prisoners in Bristol gaol. Maddock was driven out of Kettering. Thomas Clarke, called by Romaine "the Solomon of the age," was expelled from his Buckinghamshire curacy; Broughton was deprived of his Lectureship, because he asked Wesley his old Oxford friend and fellow-member of the "Holy Club"

[1] Life and Times, i, p. 480.

to preach for him. Some of the "Methodists" thus treated were of noble birth. Walter Shirley was the brother of an earl, and became the grandfather of a bishop.

Efforts to provide Sunday Schools were often met with objections. Such a proceeding was "foredoomed to failure." "Any good impressions formed would die away when the child went out into the world!" Walker was insulted while preaching in church. Rowlands was served with an inhibition when entering the pulpit. The saintly Fletcher "from whose countenance beamed Heaven" became a target for the discourses of the neighbouring clergy; an action was laid against him under the Conventicle Act for preaching in a widow's cottage. "Many a hearty curse from the colliers for the plain[1] words I spoke," he says; thus he was opposed by rich and poor alike. Even when Simpson founded a Benefit Society in Macclesfield for women it was opposed, though its objects were the provision of Old Age Pensions as well as Sick pay. Announced for a sermon at a London church, Venn found himself obliged to take the whole service as the curate refused to help him. Yet with his smile and cheery open countenance Venn certainly did not resemble the traditional "Methodist." Scott was hanged in effigy.

As a result of this persecution Lectureships, suppressed by Archbishop Laud on the ground of Puritanship, proved to be havens of refuge for the distressed Evangelical, eagerly restored by Evangelical patrons, and as eagerly sought. Cecil, Woodd, Pratt, Foster and others held them.

It is difficult for one who has not studied the literature of the period to realize the scurrility of the attacks. Berridge was known for years as "the old Devil."

[1] Life (Benson) 346

Conyers as "old Born again." Whitefield "a religious mountebank." Epithets such as the following were continually showered: "fanatical divines"; "clerical enthusiasts"; "sanctified cobblers"; "the pretended favourites of Heaven"; "mercenary strangers"; "spiritual pedlars"; "those who set themselves to correct the Church of England." They suffered ridicule from the pens of Thomas Chatterton, Churchill and others.

There was power in their preaching. At Creaton the clerical gatherings were well attended. Laymen were invited, and a sermon was delivered by some well-known Evangelical Minister. Robinson of Leicester on one occasion attracted a congregation of five hundred hearers.

The Episcopal veto was a serious hindrance. One Bishop instructed the Churchwardens not to allow any Clergyman outside the Diocese to officiate in the Church, an arbitrary proceeding which led to the abandonment of the services. Another Bishop did not scruple to declare "Church Methodism is the disease of my Diocese: it shall be the business of my life to extirpate it."[1] Though as yet no Bishop had identified himself with the Evangelical party, Porteus was in most things in full sympathy.

Such devoted sons of the Church as Romaine, Walker, Fletcher, Milner—to name a few only—were unrecognized, while preferment fell to the lot of those who showed not a tithe of their activities.

It must however, be owned that they received a considerable indulgence by being allowed in many cases to preach in unlicensed and unconsecrated buildings with little or no remonstrance.

Nor were women allowed to go scot free. Lady

[1] T. Jones Life, 119.

Huntingdon was a sufferer: though of royal descent she was not spared. Mary Bosanquet was also a victim, a staunch member of the Church, and better known as the wife of the saintly Fletcher of Madeley. When young she had been turned out of her home on account of her religious principles; when a widow, she was refused the Holy Communion by the curate of her late husband's parish. Hannah More bewailed the opposition she had to bear from Methodist preachers who did not shrink from publicly ridiculing her good work, on the ground that it attracted people from themselves to the Church.[1] Her chief opponent was a farmer worth £1000 a year. His argument was that he did not want "saints" but workmen, while his wife added "the lower classes are fated to be wicked."[2] It was wrong to go against what is decreed." If anything can ever be done, Hannah bewailed, it must be done through "very fires." Dissent she alleged was even more active in opposition than the church. The windows of her school were broken because the parents of her scholars were invited to come to listen to a sermon read to them. The pretext was that such a proceeding was "Methodistical." Her writings were represented as Calvinism in disguise.

EVANGELICALS AND NONCONFORMITY

The Evangelicals were quite alive to the weaknesses of Nonconformity. Politics, they agreed, were the main cause of its admitted decline, both in numbers and in spiritual power. Take the words of Jones of Creaton "Dr. Priestley has done much in the land . . . has greatly corrupted the Dissenters, and has called

[1] Meakin, p. 329. [2] Roberts II. 314.

our Bishops to their arms. Several of them have of late decidedly taken the side of Gospel truths. The Dissenters are evidently departing fast from the truth; and those who hold the truth in theory have lost the love of it, and have declined in the life and power of religion. Their attention is turned to political subjects, and we must consider them as a body, a political faction."[1]

Robinson incurred the animosity of many Leicester Nonconformists by insisting on the value of church teaching.

They objected to the want of devotion shown in their Services, the postures and behaviour of the worshippers. Says Venn; "I never was at worship with a congregation of Dissenters without being amazed at their indevotion. Could a painter draw from life their attitude and their behaviour, no one would know that they were a people worshipping GOD, for common-sense tells us that our posture, if not bowing the knee should be that of self-abasement and deep contrition. The eyes should be shut and the face covered and a deep solemnity over the whole assembly."[2]

The confession of one of their own historians (Dr. Stoughton) puts things very plainly when he speaks of the "spiritual indifference," the "drooping tide of decline in zeal and spirituality."[3] "Religion was more an intellectual exercise than anything else . . . they did not look with favour upon their Wesleyan brethren."

So, too, Dr. Watt's "a general decay of vital religion in the hearts and lives of men"[4] words, he adds applying

[1] Life, p. 112.

[2] MSS.

[3] Religion, v. ii. p. 226.

[4] Stevens, v. i. p. 12, 1878.

to Church and Chapel alike. "The keen east wind of rationalism was chilling the very life of Ministers and people."[1] Of the Olney preachers one of their Nonconformist supporters laments that the "gold was become dim," such the decline in zeal and spirituality. Nor were their lives always consistent, the result being that the congregations had greatly dwindled. "A cold declaiming way of preaching." The Hyper-Calvinism of the Baptists was also little to the taste of Newton, though on the most friendly terms with the Ministers.[1] Freedom from persecution had resulted in laxity and torpor. Spiritual decline had gradually usurped the place and power of a sturdy Puritanism, and a worldly spirit crept in.

Mrs. Barbauld, the daughter of a distinguished Dissenting Minister, complains that the Presbyterians, while objecting to the observance of such days as Ascension Day or the Conversion of St. Paul were eager to celebrate annually the Demolition of the Bastille.

So, too, in a recent publication (I. Smith's "Nonconformity") it is owned that they "had not gone out to appeal to the great masses as was soon to be shown by John Wesley and George Whitefield. Without Missionary work they became flaccid, and in some degree they reflected in their doctrines the rationalising spirit and literature of the times."[2]

In the early days of the Revival it was only Doddridge of the more important Ministers who recognised its value

They much dreaded the "Methodist fever."

The testimony of Jay—his conversion was the result of a Methodist sermon—the well-known Nonconformist whom Sheridan described as the most manly preacher he had ever heard, is of interest especially as indicating

[1] Dale, Evangelical Revival, p. 13, etc. [2] p. 132

the prejudice excited by the bearing of the lay preacher. In defence of Lady Huntingdon's students he says "we do want scholars but does not the day require also preachers of a very different complexion from many of those who are not illiterate and have even vouchers for their sufficiency at the end of their names, what is wanting is preaching which should come home not only to every man's business but to every man's bosom . . . not a blank verse style of preaching. . . ."

The church was asleep in the dark; the Dissenters in the light, . . . thought that exegesis was better for the masses than exposition or German criticism than Christian experience.[1]

Those who were sound in the faith were precise, formal and inactive. Some of their congregations had Socinianized or Arianized.[2]

I have always thought that the regular dissenters were to blame. They did not indeed oppose, as the church generally did, on the ground of doctrine, for in this they essentially acquiesced, but as to the mode of preaching. The dissenters were educated ministers themselves (for at that time there was scarcely a lay preacher among them) and their sermons were not only orthodox but studied, grammatically correct, and methodical, but with a very few exceptions pointless, cold, and drawled off from notes. The new preachers were often boisterous, rude, coarse, incoherent, yet they were powerful and efficient, and noise and novelty will not account for all the effects they produced."[3]

So, too a Wesleyan: "A great decay of spiritual religion, arising perhaps partly from the very high Calvinism which some of them maintained, but chiefly

[1] Works, v. 5, 56 etc.

[2] Wright, Town of Cowper, p. 132, etc.

[3] Jay, Autobiography, p.141.

from the evangelical ministry which had been introduced among them."[1] (Jackson)

"All that was distinctively Christian or peculiar to Christianity was despised and banished, the religion of nature makes up the darling topics of our age." (Guyes).[2]

That the next generation, of which Simpson was one, became less inclined to favour irregularity may be gathered from the comment that their loyalty to the Church took an intensity which their fathers might have accused of bigotry. A picture has been drawn, by some, of the Parochial Evangelicals "ploughing" their "lonely furrow" while they envied the liberty of Wesley to preach where he liked, irrespective of the incumbent. This was a fallacy, for the majority were content with the sphere of labour entrusted to them by the Church. They had no desire whatever for greater elasticity. Fletcher when urged by Wesley, and tempted by offers from Lady Huntingdon, to leave his rough miners at Madeley replied to the argument of the former, "Others may do well in a Living: it is not your calling" with the words, "if I am called at all, I am called to preach at Madeley, nothing but Jesus and the service of His people."

On this decision, Wesley's remarks are characteristic, "I can never believe it was the will of GOD that such a burning and shining light should be *hid under a bushel.* No, instead of being confined to a country village, it ought to have shone in every corner of our land."

At the same time he adds, "however, having chosen at least for the present, this narrow field of action, he was more and more abundant in his ministerial labours both in public and in private; not contenting himself

[1] Jackson, Wesleyan Centenary, p. 7.

[2] Lelievre, Wesley, p. 22.

with preaching, but visiting his flock in every corner of his parish. . . . This further weakened his constitution which was still more effectually impaired by his intense and uninterrupted studies, in which he frequently continued, almost without any intermission, fourteen, fifteen, or sixteen hours a day."[1]

Newton claimed as a superior position that of the ordinary and settled clergyman. Glazebrook refused more than one lucrative post because it would have entailed irregularity.

They were suspicious of its teaching and methods, the two rocks on which they split being the employment of lay agency and the rejection of Calvinistic doctrines. Henry Venn (1754) asks for help, expressing his obligations warmly, without any reservation, however, of his differences in doctrinal opinions. Four years later he urges the withdrawal of the lay preachers from Huddersfield, and on refusal shows a coldness to his former friend. Walker (Truro), whom Wesley singles out (1755) as the only regular clergyman[2] who had won souls in his own parish by the use of regular means, feels constrained to write of the Methodist lay preachers in disparaging terms.[3]

The most important point of doctrine on which they differed was "Christian perfection," discussed in 1761, as will be seen from the correspondence between Wesley and Grimshaw, then drawing near the end of his days. The latter spoke of it as "a grating term" "my perfection is to know my own imperfection."[4]

It is only fair to say that his view of "assurance"

[1] Tyerman : Wesley's Designated Successor, p. 265 etc.,

[2] Tyerman Wesley, v. ii, p. 211 (1870).

[3] Life p. 222

[4] Jackson II, 192.

learned from his Father "the inward witness, my son, the inward witness, is the proof, the strongest proof of Christianity," drew from Bishop Gibson the following confession—"Mr. Wesley, if, by 'assurance' you mean an inward persuasion, whereby a man is conscious that he is in a state of salvation . . . I don't see how any good Christian can be without such." But Wesley failed to reach the standard appreciated by many of his followers. Nor was his dictum "I find no Scriptural phrase as 'faith of assurance,'" generally welcomed. At the end of his life he repudiated the assertion that an instantaneous consciouness was a necessary condition for conversion. "When," said he "fifty years ago my brother Charles and I, in the simplicity of our hearts, told the good people of England, that unless they *knew* their sins were forgiven, they were under the wrath and curse of God, I marvel they did not stone us."[1]

Is it not true that the zeal of the Methodists was admired? How could it be otherwise? But with Methodism itself the Evangelicals were not satisfied. To them the teaching was defective. It lacked a firm foundation. The saintly Walker might well write:—"I suppose if GOD spare the land we shall be principally indebted to them, nevertheless I could wish their foundations deeper laid, without which they will generally come to nothing. Most of the Methodists I have conversed with have thought believing to be feeling, and faith has been placed in the affections instead of in the heart."[2]

Among those Evangelicals who were most closely connected with the Methodists was Furley, who was on Wesley's clerical staff for some twenty-nine years, Perronet, "The Archbishop of Methodism," and others

[1] Southey, p. 175. [2] Life, 381. etc.

—Richardson and Creighton must also be included, and many who may be said to have acted as his chaplains. To the second class belonged Grimshaw and Berridge, who welcomed him in their parishes and some of them, Fletcher, Simpson, etc. attended his conferences.

As a rule it was with Whitefield rather than Wesley that they sided; it is a noticeable fact that many of his clerical helpers were Calvinists in creed, Romaine, Grimshaw, Venn, Hervey, Perronet, Jesse, Newton (also in the earlier days of the Revival, Lady Huntingdon): of these none deserted the Church of England but remained in communion, showing their faithfulness by protesting against the irregularities sanctioned by Wesley. At the Conference of 1764 twelve of them attended, but only for the purpose of "getting Wesley to withdraw his preachers from parishes where "Gospel Ministers" were working—a proposal which he promptly rejected, though he asked for unity simply on the three fundamental doctrines of original sin, justification by faith and holiness of life, leaving out the question of absolute decrees and sinless perfection.

The Spa Fields Judgment detached a number from Methodism, Venn, Jesse, Romaine and others. Romaine foresaw what would eventually take place. Berridge wrote to Lady Huntingdon:—"What will become of your students on your removal? They are virtually Dissenters now, and will be settled Dissenters then? The same will happen to many, perhaps most, of Mr. Wesley's preachers, at his death. He rules like a real Alexander—with a flaming torch, but we do not read in history of two Alexanders succeeding each other."[1]

Their doctrine as to the need of instantaneous conversion, and the way in which they spoke of being inspired,

[1] Life (Whittingham) 15, p. 517.

did not commend itself as scriptural to many of the serious clergy and laity. Dr. Hey withdrew from connection with them on that account in 1781.

In one thing they agreed—admiration for the man himself. Simpson's verdict "the late John Wesley spent his whole life, time, strength, and fortune, in spreading the knowledge of Christ and His word" they would cordially endorse. His talents were of the highest order, his zeal unquenchable, his labours almost superhuman. All this they gratefully owned: they felt the goodness they mistrusted the methods. As, however, in course of time the echoes of the Calvinian Controversy died gradually away, they readily offered their 'pulpits.' "The angularities of Methodism had in a degree worn off: he and his system were no longer misunderstood."[1]

(It may be noted that Wesley himself never uses the term "sinless perfection". What he taught may be seen from his own words, "loving GOD with all our heart and soul and strength and loving all men as Christ loved us.")

For him in his difficulties they (Romaine, e.g.) felt profound sympathy. The charge freely made against him of always aspiring to be called a Bishop they gave no ear to.

HYMNS AND A LADY CRITIC

"A verse may find him, who a Sermon flies," so sang George Herbert. It is only natural that the feelings aroused by evangelistic preaching should seek some suitable means of expression. Even the hymns of Isaac Watts, sung in the place of the hackneyed

[1] Urlin, Wesley, p. 128. [2] Curnock, iv. 469.

paraphrases of the metrical Psalms, the clerk giving them out line by line, did not meet that need. Hence the eagerness of the Evangelicals to supply something more suitable.

It must not be forgotten that the average Churchman of that day had by tradition, an inveterate prejudice against hymn singing. So Dr. Johnson e.g. to quote his own words, "seeing a poor girl at the Sacrament in a bed gown, I gave her privately a crown, though I saw Hart's Hymns in her hands."[1]

In a word, hymn singing smacked of "enthusiasm" the *bête noire* of every good Churchman.

"If the hymns were not Methodistical, the tunes were," was the objection raised to the singing of Watt's Hymns by a Somerset farmer in the days of Hannah More—he had no ear for music—"because they are not in Farmer Clapp's book."[2]

Even Romaine strongly objected to the passing of Tate and Brady's metrical version of the Psalms. To him Watts' Hymns were "Watts' Whims," nor did he shrink from the bold assertion that "GOD does bless the singing of Psalms in the Church, and does not bless the singing of men's Hymns,"[3] words of which Newton voiced the opinions of his best friends when he wrote, "I think many must wish that this book had not appeared."

Hannah More, too, no mean judge of human nature, puts into the mouth of Florio, one of her characters, the words :

> "When any change was brewing
> Reform was a fine name for Ruin,
> He thought 'twould show a falling State,
> If Sternhold should give way to Tate"[4]

[1] "The Church Porch." i
[2] Life vol iii, p. 103. Boswell (Croker), p. 165.
[3] Works, vol. v, p 478.
[4] Line 227.

Nor was the opposition confined to the Church: Dissent had an equal objection. "Carnal worship" was one of the many disparaging terms used of them.

"Chacun à son goût." The introduction of hymns became popular; they knew them to be invaluable for teaching doctrine; This led to the compilation of a succession of Evangelical hymn books. Their output grew with time, ranging from the modest 170 Hymns and Psalms of Madan to the 491 Hymns and Psalms, and 27 Anthems of Simpson's "Select Psalms and Hymns." (1776). As a musical man, like most Yorkshire folk, he was not content with psalms and hymns alone; his compilation may be said to have touched high-water mark: he was greatly in favour of the singing of hymns remarking "if these arguments will not remove the scruples of serious, candid and well-meaning Christians of every Denomination, nothing that I can further urge would be attended with that happy result."[1]

Among these compilers are to be found also Berridge, Venn, and Romaine. The experiences of Thomas Robinson of Leicester, were far from pleasant. His difficulties with the Witcham choir were but a trifle compared with the vagaries of the Leicester choristers, who bellowed out the most unsuitable psalms in place of the hymns which he had instructed the clerk to announce. It needs hardly the remark that the best known production was the 'Olney Hymns,' the work of the poet Cowper. Urged to the task by his clerical friend, Newton, Cowper contributed sixty-eight including "Hark, hark my soul," "God moves in a mysterious way" (supposed to have been composed after the author's frustrated attempt at suicide;) "Oh, for a closer walk with GOD," etc. To Newton's pen the Church owes "How sweet the Name of Jesus sounds";

[1] Southey (Cowper), 1, 465.

" Glorious things " ; and other favourites, two hundred and eighty in all.

This collection was designed for the use of those attending services at the Olney " Great House ; " it was destined to supply the needs of a far wider circle of Christians in after days. The hope of the compilers was that the more polished productions of poets might break down the prejudices raised against hymnody by the doggerel of Darney, and such like versifiers.

LADY HUNTINGDON—A LADY CRITIC

In the person of Lady Huntingdon hymn singing found a strong supporter. A book compiled by her with the assistance of her cousin, the Hon. and Rev. Walter Shirley, was published in 1780. A copy kindly put at the disposal of the author is of much interest. (See preface). It contains a number of comments from her own pen, shewing that her views, especially after the Calvinistic controversy, became more stereotyped : her scent for " heresy " more acute. What had previously passed unchallenged was now unorthodox. In this connection it is interesting to note that Berridge was also anxious to suppress his hymn book on adopting more Calvinistic views. " A clear Gospel tone," he said " was not to be found in them all."[1] To give a few only of Lady Huntingdon's criticisms, which certainly did not lack pungency. On the words " Grace will complete what Grace begins," she writes in the margin—" Notwithstanding all John Wesley says to the contrary " ; and " John Wesley," be it remembered, was the first person she sent for in her early wedded life to consult as to her

[1] Preface to Sion's Songs, (n.p.) Whittingham.

soul's welfare, and afterwards one of her own chaplains. It is good to note, however, that some of the Methodist hymns come in for their merited appreciation. Oliver's "The God of Abraham praise" calls forth "very good: all parts, especially the second." Wesley's "Jesu, Lover of my soul" is "charming." On "Take my heart, and make it new," she says "The heart must be renewed before any of these desires could take place." Many of the hymns elicit a simple "Amen"; of some her approval is marked by "charming," "excellent," "very true," etc. On the other hand she is lavish with disapproval,—"Sad stuff,"—"sad poetry," "not true." To give instances—

> "What is my anchor?
> If you ask a hungry, helpless soul,"

provokes the retort "This anchor will slip the cable, my friend."

> "Assumes at God's right hand a seat,
> And let me sit beneath His feet,"

"Assumes" is a very improper word. The redeemed of the Lord will sit with Christ on His Throne, not as slaves but as compeers and His equals"; "Sing till the love of sin departs," "Sin will be done away with before he can sing at all." "Yet shall I, Lord, the work complete?" "What work is this you are to complete? The Christian's work is but to love and praise his Christ for His matchless love"; and

> "If he can obtain Thy leave
> Let Satan pluck me thence,"

"Presumptuous, idle stuff"; "I humbly answer, No," "Do you indeed, Mr. Humility?"

In such comments as the following we can trace her own experience. On Cowper's lines "Behind a frowning providence," etc. "It is hard work to view severe chastisement as an effect of Fatherly love"; on

"For when we least expect His aid"—"Indeed He does." When it is affirmed "If grace doth more than sin abound"—"'If' is an improper word when GOD says it does." "When my Surety paid it all,"—"Indeed He did." On GOD's Love, she comments "GOD looks with pleasure on Christ: He dips His pen in His blood to write our pardon"; "FINISHED," "This word to a believer is worth a thousand worlds."

An interesting piece of autobiography appears in her note on the page containing the lines—

> "This was the way I long had sought,
> And mourned because I found it not,
> Till late I heard my Saviour say
> 'Come hither, Soul, I am the Way.'"

where she writes "For more than twenty-eight years this was the case with S.S. (? S.H.)"

From the remarks made in the preface to the revised and enlarged edition of these hymns (1854), as long ago as 1837 the "Evangelical Recorder" speaks of "hymns totally unfit to appear in any Church Collection," so we may gather that the offending words fell under the words of "undesirable phrases," "inferior in poetry," or "somewhat objectionable in modes of expression . . . unsuited to general use" as they almost entirely disappear—not before in the eyes of the Connexion a change was wanted.

A SUCCOURER OF MANY

LADY HUNTINGDON is one of the early Evangelicals who claims special notice: with Simpson she was several times brought into contact. "If a Roman Catholic," says Macaulay, "she would have a place in the Calendar as 'Saint Selina.'"[1] Descended, as was

[1] Essays, Ranke's Popes, p. 241.

her husband, from what the Briton venerates, a royal stock, and always bearing a consciousness of her high rank, she played the part of a Lady Bountiful. Horace Walpole spoke of her as "Queen of the Methodists," "The Patriarchess," "Pope Joan Huntingdon," amongst other derisive names. She was on the most friendly terms with the Wesleys, after her conversion in 1742—an event she often alluded to as the result of impressions from the life of her sister-in-law, Lady Margaret Hastings, a convert of Ingham, the Yorkshire Evangelist, a member of the original "Holy Club." But as early as 1768 the relations between the Wesleys and herself were becoming strained, till in 1771 John was prohibited from preaching in any of her chapels. "Grossly arrogant and despotic: constantly talking of 'My Scholars, My Orphanage, My Church' was his sarcastic comment. "My Lady's preachers" come in for special castigation.[1] Her meetings "Spiritual Routs" Horace Walpole called them—were attended by a number of the nobility, and other great ones of the earth. Among them were Lords Dartmouth, Chesterfield, Bolingbroke, Chatham, Bath and North, and Horace Walpole himself; likewise Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, and the Ladies Carteret, Suffolk, Townsend, and others. Royalty was represented by the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Cumberland. But not a few, present, it is feared, to oblige Lady Huntingdon, did not hesitate in some cases to make fun of the preacher behind his back. Lady Townsend certainly did. Still there were to be found some who "came to scoff," and yet "remained to pray." "Lady Huntingdon's chapel and Dr. Madan's acting in it are now the great spectacle of this place. Saints and sinners equally crowd to see the one and hear the

[1] Curnock, Wesley, vol. vi, p. 287.

other," again to quote Horace Walpole. "If you ever think of returning to England, you must prepare yourself with Methodism, I really believe it will be necessary; this sect increases as fast as almost ever any religious nonsense did. . . . The Methodists love your big sinners as proper subjects to work upon—and indeed, they have a plentiful harvest."[1]

So great was her influence, as with a passionate yearning for souls she worked for GOD amongst the fashionable circle in which she moved, that such a worldling as Lord Chesterfield, whose wife owed her conversion to Whitefield, offered her £20 as a subscription. Nothing deferred by ridicule, she built a chapel even in Bath, the city thronged by a frivolous crowd, the scene too, of an encounter between Wesley and the notorious Beau Nash. The former had dared to beard this self-appointed Master of the Ceremonies whose word was law; but suffered an ignominious defeat when he, like the imperious coxcomb that he was, asked Wesley to produce his licence "to hold a conventicle."

With the exception of a number of letters nothing of literary interest remains. The work for which she had been collecting materials (a Life of Rowlands, the Welsh Evangelist) who, though driven out of the Church, remained firm in his allegiance, was cut short by her death in 1791.[2] Some of her letters are decidedly dictatorial: others breathe a humble spirit. Like most of the Evangelicals she made copious use of scriptural phraseology. But a perusal presents a faithful picture of one in dead earnest about the things of the soul. With the wives of the Clergy she was not as a rule popular. She made them feel her

[1] Lady Huntingdon's Life and Times v. i, 108

[2] Life of Rowlands, p. 45

superiority of birth. But there were a few exceptions. These included Mrs. Fletcher, Mrs. Charles Wesley, and Mrs. Pentycross. Towards their husbands she was far more affable. Common honesty, however, compels us to admit that she was imperious in her treatment of others and ill brooked any opposition. Hence the severance by the saintly Fletcher of his connection with Trevecca. Nor was she always averse from flattery—a quality which shews itself in the letters of some of the clergy with whom she had dealings.

To her own chaplains she did not hesitate to speak her mind freely, when she disagreed with their doctrinal teaching. Venn was one, Berridge was another. The latter one of the few who did not stand in awe of her, used to refer to her epistles as "scorpion letters." In one of his letters—to take a single instance—he compares her to "a Pope . . . not a Mother in Israel" . . . with a "Vatican Bull."[1] To her, Whitefield was "Your ladyship's most obliged, obedient, humble and willing servant," while Berridge was content with "much obliged and affectionate servant."

On the other hand her liberality was great. She sold her jewels in order that the work might not flag. Her devotion was intense: her moral courage in supporting the Revival beyond all praise. When she looked upon anything as wrong she did not hesitate to say so, even though the offender was of high social position. When routs were common at Lambeth Palace under the auspices of Mrs. Cornwallis, the Primate's wife, she feared not to utter a rebuke, and, when unheeded, she took steps to bring the matter under George III's notice. Organisation was her forte—a qualification wanting in Whitefield: her fault an impression that anyone who went forth with her *imprimatur* was *ipso facto* more or

[1] Life, p. 502, etc.

less perfect. Even they did not always escape her somewhat unsparing and despotic pen—as one of them found out to his cost when he was told of his "want of judgment which excluded him from many pulpits; and vanity which hurts but justly, as if no one but himself preached the Gospel." She can fairly claim to have been a peace-maker for she tried to reconcile Whitefield and the Wesleys. Forgiving, was she too, of injuries—unless an exception be mentioned in the case of Rowland Hill who, though of similar views, was not allowed to preach, in spite of the intercession of mutual friends, in any of her chapels after he had been guilty of, as she held, publicly speaking of her in an unbecoming manner. Thus when seventy-three years of age she refused this favour to one whom she had befriended in his youth when even his own parents were unwilling to countenance his " Methodistical " proceedings.

When Clayton, one of her ablest and most trusted candidates for Ordination, wrote to express his intention to become a Nonconformist Minister, she assured him that though as a Churchwoman she deeply regretted it, the step should make no difference in her treatment of him. Ten years later, not long before her death, she writes: " My good old friend . . . my best wishes and prayers attend you."

She was a woman of much trouble who had known sorrow by painful experience in the loss of her eldest son, to her grief of sceptical views, at eighteen years of age, and the death of five other children. Her health, at the best of times, was precarious, but up to the date of the Spa Fields Judgment which resulted in her putting her Chapels, as practically Nonconformist places of Worship under the Toleration Act, she was

aided in her attempt to invade the neighbouring parishes by an unpaid squadron of Clergy, including Shirley her cousin, Whitefield, Romaine, Newton, Martin Madan, Jesse, Haweis, Pentycross, Townsend, Fletcher, Maddock and others, most of whom afterwards withdrew. Her Ladyship's well-meant efforts to train Evangelists—"Comets" they were often called, at Trevecca College in Wales opened in 1768, the first student being Glazebrook, were not appreciated by Wesley who speaks of them as "raw, pert young men who screamed and railed"; "A religious school for training Dissenting Ministers,"[1] (He was always faithful in his dealings with this somewhat imperious lady.) As to her views with regard to Dissent suffice it to say that the "protection" which she freely offered to Evangelical Churches, she did not extend to Nonconformist Chapels. But by allowing a public ordination of ministers she virtually seceded from the Church of England—March 9th, 1783, having two years earlier placed her chapels under the Toleration Act which exempted from pains and penalties persons dissenting from the Church of England. Two courses were open to her, either to close her chapels or to register them under an Act which really only applied to Dissent. As a Churchwoman she felt greatly grieved to choose the latter, but she felt that the cause of truth must have the foremost place.

Even though after the Spa Fields Judgment the Evangelical Clergy deserted her cause, no longer "itinerating" with her, she remained on the most friendly terms with them. Again, when Lindsey, who owed much to her, now a Unitarian, championed the Feathers Tavern petition against which she was most

[1] Life (Curnock) v. 6, p. 208, etc.

strongly opposed, he was always assured of a kindly welcome.

She possessed an extraordinary influence on high-class Society. An object of cheap sneers in a wordly age, her worth was yet recognised from King George the Third downwards. " My work is done "—such were among her last words. Her life had not been lived in vain.

LADY GLENORCHY

" At Jesus' Feet "

Between Lady Huntingdon and her friend, Lady Glenorchy, there was a strong contrast; not in religious views, for they were both of them Calvinists, the latter being led to greater lengths than the former. In temperament Lady Glenorchy was of a lovable disposition, self-conscious, retiring, and at times despondent: her friend, apt to be domineering, unconsciously self-asserting, and forgetful of the feelings of others. When the Calvinistic controversy broke out, she dismissed Wesley from her chaplainship though he had shown a very Catholic spirit in recommending to her a pronounced Calvinist. In this action one seems to see the hand of Lady Huntingdon, who had treated him in a similar manner. Lady Huntingdon's life, one of thorough and ungrudging self-sacrifice was a bright and much needed contrast to a selfish and mercenary age. She gave herself and her large fortune to the work. Her great desire stands forth clearly in the words of her will " The good of mankind and the spread and promotion of the Gospel of the Lord GOD and Saviour Jesus Christ, both abroad and at home."[1]

[1] Life and Times ii. 489.

Even such a sceptic as Lord Chesterfield could write, "Her character is a very popular one, her enthusiasm has raised it with many people and has lowered it with none." A woman of prayer when she went with her chaplains and other clergy on their preaching excursions, it was simply as a member of their congregations; while the sermon was being preached she made it a practice to engage in private intercession on behalf of the preacher. She had the mistaken idea that as a Peeress she could nominate any Clergyman she wished as Chaplain to act anywhere without any respect to parochial bounds. This brought her into collision with the Church Authorities. Even Bishop Porteus, who sympathised with the Evangelicals felt obliged to write "I will vigorously resist the invasion of unauthorised preachers upon our parish Churches."[1]

METHODISM

If then these seriously minded people were charged with "Methodism," "ranting" of modern parlance —in those days it was a stock charge—what was it? It has been defined as "a bugbear word very ingeniously introduced to frighten people from expressing their "sentiments which they ought to cherish and avow." A term now applied to all vital Christianity" so (Hannah More).[2] In the loosest sense of the word, it was applied as a term of scorn to brand any one who in an age of laxity in religion tried to live a stricter life. It was given to many who were not in sympathy with Wesley and in some cases opposed to him and his preachers. Thus William Law was so named; so, too, Cadogan,

[1] Perry, vol. iii.p. 113, [2] Roberts, ii. 429

because he called his people to a stricter observance of Church Festivals. Lord Lyttelton was dubbed "a Methodist" because he gave up his scepticism, and became a devout believer in the Resurrection: so also Lindsey because he started a Sunday School. Scott, too, in his Socinian days, earned this opprobrious designation.

To lump these and others together *en masse* and brand them with the term "Methodists" was a convenient and easy proceeding.

NUMBERS, "WHAT HATH GOD WROUGHT?"

The question of numbers has long been a subject of controversy. It is safe to take Gladstone's calculation that at the end of George III's reign one in every twenty of the clergy was an Evangelical,[1] though Lecky writes that "the Evangelical Movement had become dominant in England."[2] To note other calculations as given by contemporaries. Wesley states that in 1778 he knew of only ten such in England: another reckoning was forty in 1778, whereas in 1793 Romaine put them down at more than five hundred. Even in London Evangelical Incumbents at one time could be counted on the fingers of one hand. The strength of the party was limited to these holding Lectureships or having the charge of proprietary chapels.

"When I set out twenty-four years ago (about 1750, Ed.)" writes Venn, "as to large towns, I knew but of Truro, and Bradford" (Wilts) e.g. Rogers to whom the Parish owed its School.[3]

[1] Gleanings, vii., p. 210. British Quarterly Review, July 1879.

[2] England: 18th century: ii. 627.

[3] Life, p. 209.

But it must not be overlooked that in other parts of England many Evangelicals were to be found doing a good work. In the North were Grimshaw (Haworth), Venn, (Huddersfield) and Milner; in the West Fletcher (Madeley) Symes and his curate, Rouquet (Bristol), Hart, Easterbrook, Tandy, Toplady (Somerset) and Walker (Truro). In the Midlands were Hervey, Berridge (Everton), Newton (Olney), with others.

"BY THEIR FRUITS YE SHALL KNOW THEM"

It is falsely supposed by some that they "were pious men who knew their Bibles, but did not do much work."

From the abundance of the fruit great is the difficulty of selection. To give a few cases only:—Such was the attractive force of Walker's preaching at Truro that it was said that a cannon might be fired down the streets on Sundays during service time without a a chance of killing a single human being. At an afternoon lecture in St. Giles-in-the-Fields there were at times some two thousands present. A valid proof of zeal was the energy thrown into Evangelistic work, Fletcher among the twenty thousand rough Shropshire lads; Venn with the operatives at Huddersfield; Grimshaw in the heart of the Yorkshire moors; Newton first in a Bedfordshire town where a new gallery had to be built to accommodate his hearers in the parish church; and later among the London merchants at the City church of St. Mary Woolnoth. Cornelius Bayley had at times no less than five hundred communicants in St. James' Church, Manchester. They seldom had to preach to empty benches. Maddock who found a mere handful of worshippers at Creaton had to erect an extra gallery to accommodate those hearers who before stood in the

churchyard. He handed over a "full church" to Jones his successor who, in his turn, kept up the congregation for forty-five years, members coming from some twenty different parishes. Robinson preached to about eight hundred at Leicester. Conyers had eighteen hundred communicants: his preaching always attracted crowds whether of the Yorkshire folk at Helmsley, or South Londoners at Deptford; Cadogan's Church was crowded at Reading or at Chelsea. Atkinson ministered to one of the largest gatherings in the kingdom, and was an indefatigable visitor.

If it be urged that they had a bitter feeling against the Roman Catholics, the answer is, that in this respect they had Scriptural authority to regard it as an apostasy.

"SPOTS IN THE SUN"

They had their limitations. They were not perfect nor did they claim perfection. "There were spots even in the sun" was one of their favourite sayings.

Ungracious, though it may seem to be, to find fault with men so used of GOD, common justice forbids that their weak points should be passed over in silence. A censorious spirit was oft-times all too apparent.

When William Richardson could write that during the first twenty-three years of his life he had never met with a person who was "serious in religion," or Toplady, that in his college days "a converted man was as rare as a comet,"—opinions such as these did not commend themselves to an outside world.

It must not be supposed, however, that they claimed a monopoly of piety: they would have been the last to make any such pretension. Among many who did not sympathise with them in important things true

spirituality existed. The Non-Jurors were very devout.

In all ages GOD has had all His faithful ones ; and it is for us to remember that " charity thinketh no evil and is kind," (1 Cor. xiii. 5, 4.)

" About the greatest of Articles of the Christian Creed they said very little, e.g. the Trinity " (Dale)[1] This does not hold good in many cases, e.g. Simpson wrote a Treatise (1798) on the subject.

" The Clergy," writes Hey (the Evangelical) " would make themselves a more respectable body if their conduct was more consistent with the rules of their Church : if they strove more to inspire their people with a love of their public prayers and Church order and lead them to cultivate communion with GOD in a way that would not detach them from the Church they profess to serve."[2]

But, admitting these criticisms, does not the important fact remain that the influence of these men spread throughout the land. And after all, does not GOD reckon by hearts rather than by a mere computation of heads ?

From this imperfect survey the consoling lesson may be drawn that the power of the Word preached by them which in spite of their failings touched so many hearts and changed so many lives, must, indeed, have been great. The Christian's failures are often hidden successes. That the best of them were anxious in later life to atone for their earlier indiscretions may be seen from the words of Whitefield who owned towards the close of his days that his fondness for " Scriptural language " had led him to use " a style too apostolic " ; and at the same time " he had been too bitter in ' his ' zeal " ; that he had " spoken in ' his ' own spirit,"

[1] Evangelicals, p. 37.

[2] Wilberforce (R1. & S.) Correspondence. vol. i. p. 19.

when he thought that he was writing and speaking by " the assistance of the Spirit of God." "Many and frequent as my mistakes have been, as soon as I am aware of them they shall be publicly acknowledged and retracted." So writes he.[1] Rowland Hill, too—certainly an arch offender—witness his scurrilous attacks on Wesley, writes—" Thus have I done my utmost to prevent the evil that might arise from my wrong touches of the Ark of God."[2]

" I have been very high-church in the former years of my life," says Romaine, " but the Lord has brought me down : and now I can rejoice in, and wish well to the ministers of my Master of every denomination."[3]

Was there not the danger of too much of preaching and too little of worship? Some of them certainly thought so.

Reviewing his more than forty years of work, Venn could write " I was guilty of a great neglect, in not instructing my people more frequently and fully concerning the danger of preferring and exalting the ordinance of preaching, to the spiritual worship of God in the congregation, which is the great end the Gospel, when received should produce."[4]

Prayer, after all, is the end of preaching.

Nor is it fair to brand the Revival with all the actions of individuals. When Martin Madan wrote his " Thelyphora," " The Gospel according to Madan " as Hannah More dubbed it, Lady Huntingdon did her best to stop its circulation. She said she would get three thousand signatures against its publication. " If there were six thousand it should not prevent it,"[5] was the calm but uncompromising reply. Sir Richard

[1] Eayr's Methodism, vol. i, p. 268.

[2] Life (Sidney), p. 123. [3] S.P.C.K. Life, p. 24.

[4] Life, p. 591. [5] Life and Times, ii, p. 464.

Hill lashed in "Rolliad" showed an equal but unavailing aversion.

There were divergencies of opinion—Calvinists and Calvinists, i.e. "Moderate" and "Hyper." To the former belonged Newton who thus described himself:—"I am what they call a Calvinist, yet there are flights, niceties and hard sayings among some of that system which I do not choose to imitate." "I am a sort of speckled hen among my Calvinist brethren. I am a mighty good Churchman, but pass amongst such as a Dissenter in prunello." "I am considered an Arminian among the high Calvinists and as a Calvinist among the strenuous Arminians."[1]

"I resolved when I entered the Ministry if I was anything I would be a physician and not a robe maker; I would endeavour to recover my patients and leave the cut of their garments to those whose business it was."

To the "Hypers" belonged such apostles of undiluted Calvinism as Toplady. Others, like Scott, preached what has been termed a half-hearted, but most practical and self-denying Calvinism, plain practical truths free from refined niceties of doctrine.

Crosse preached Arminianism for thirty years at Bradford.

SERMONS

Their sermons were long. But in those days a long sermon was not tabooed. Venn preached an hour and a half: not "one seemed tired."[2] (Wesley, on the other hand, limited his whole Service to an hour.)[3] Newton writes, "I cannot wind up my ends to my own

[1] Life and Works, i, p 254. 304.

[2] Life, p. 224. [3] Southey, p. 259.

satisfaction in a much shorter time."[1] He gave proof of the liberality of his views by taking as subjects some of the texts from the "Messiah." A bold stand was made against a growing Antinomianism and hyper-Calvinism as the following letter (which introduces a new correspondent in the person of Roger Bentley), amply proves. (Scott, too, repeatedly refers to it):— "The South is not the place to take Curates from; they are too full of themselves; too much the fine gentleman, and run violently into a party spirit. . . . Nothing will do in London but rigid Calvinism." The letter itself is headed Camberwell and is dated May, 1777.[2]

In many cases they adopted the practise of extempore preaching in the place of the lifeless sermon or moral essay, as it might have been termed. The result was not seldom to arouse suspicion, if not to expose to ridicule and opposition. At the same time their teaching was didactic. They laid stress on the duties as well as the privileges of the Christian life. . . . Scott, e.g. chose his week night sermon at Olney for the inculcation of moral duties, both there, and later perhaps more emphatically at the Lock Hospital, warning his congregation against Antinomianism. Venn writes "I would have you preach upon the Commandments. GOD always blesses that preaching."[3]

[1] Works, i, p. 278. [2] MSS. [3] Life, p. 364.

KNOWN BY THEIR FRUITS

It may be fairly stated too, that branches of ordinary parochial activities were practically unheard of until introduced by the despised Evangelicals. It was with much trepidation, and not seldom in the teeth of the strongest opposition, that they ventured to attempt the singing of hymns, prayer-meetings, week night, and often, Sunday evening services. Joseph Easterbrook is said to have spent two years in visiting his large parish of Temple, Bristol. He preached a sermon in every house. Haweis of Aldwinkle had a multitude of hearers. Crosse, of Bradford, used regularly to walk fifty miles a week while visiting his parish. Simpson himself worked untiringly amongst the silk-throwsters of Macclesfield. Joseph Milner, like Simpson, his fellow countryman, passed away at an early age, worn out by teaching for five or six hours a day, in addition to the faithful discharge of parochial duties. Stillingfleet, at Hotham, gave liberally, assisted by his wife, to the necessities of his parishioners among whom he laboured as a model parish priest. Hervey, a man of saintly and self-denying life, humble and scholarly, ministered contentedly to the needs of the rustics of a country district. Romaine had a more refined following. There were others not so well known to the world, but a tower of strength in their own neighbourhood. They felt their responsibility as Parish Priests, and the truth of Newton's words, " A parish is an awful millstone indeed to those who see nothing valuable in the flock but the fleece."

A few words as to their doctrine.

THE FAITH ONCE DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS

It may be summed up in "the Three Rs., Ruin, Redemption, Regeneration." Religion rests on two pillars, namely, what Christ did for us in His flesh, and what He does in us by His Spirit: most errors spring from separating those things which God hath joined together, and insisting on some parts of the Word of God, almost to the exclusion of the rest."[1]

The Movement itself has been chivalrously described by Mr. Gladstone as a "strong, systematic, outspoken, and determined reaction against the prevailing standards both of life and preaching. It aimed at bringing back on a large scale, and by an aggressive movement the Cross and all that the Cross essentially implies. There is now little question that they preached Christ."[2]

They held that the heart was totally corrupt, and must be changed, a doctrine which gave great offence to the upper class, who objected to being put on the level "with the common wretches that crawl on the earth. This is highly offensive and insulting.[3] Do you mean to say that I must be saved like one of my own footmen?" This enquiry of an indignant countess is an apt commentary on the ordinary relations then existing between rich and poor, employer and servant.

These "exceptional doctrines" they were warned by some of the Bishops to lay aside as a *sine quâ non* in receiving leave to officiate. The comment of the Archbishop of York to Conyers after listening to his Visitation sermon,

"If you go on preaching such *stuff* you will drive all

[1] Newton, Works, i, p. 76. [2] Gleanings, vii. p. 207.

[3] Countess of Huntingdon and her Circle, p. 49.

your parish mad. Were you to inculcate the morality of Socrates, it would do more good than canting about the new birth "[1] was not a solitary instance of Episcopal bias. (" Canting crew " was the term sometimes applied to the Evangelicals.)

To revive in its purity as a living force the truth enshrined in the Bible and the Church formularies was their desire. They played their part in stemming the rising Arianism by a fresh presentation of the time-honoured but then neglected Church creeds. The Divinity of Christ held a most important place in their preaching. To them He was the One Who could save from the power as well as the condemnation of sin. They held that, whereas philosophy appealed to the educated and wise exclusively, the message of the Gospel was for the uneducated also. And this was in days when " virtue " was the favourite pulpit word. They had a profound belief that the soul of man was of infinite value in the eyes of GOD. " Sir," said Johnson, " it is owing to their expressing themselves in a plain and familiar manner which is the only way to do good to the common people and which Clergymen of genius and learning ought to do from a principle of duty when it is suited to their congregations."[2] It was, to use the words of the eminent sculptor, John Bacon, " the *old* religion revived with *new* energy, and treated as if the preacher really *meant* what he said."[3]

They inherited the Puritan spirit of the Reformers while claiming allegiance to the Church teachings of such sixteenth century divines as Cosin, Jewel, Hooker and others. Justification by faith, accordingly was the central doctrine preached, coupled with the religion of experience.

[1] Huntingdon, Life and Times, v. i, p. 280 (1839).

[2] Boswell, p. 156 (1848). [3] Life (Cecil) (1801), p. 47.

CHARACTERISTICS

One or two points may be noted.

EVANGELICAL DIARIES

It was an almost universal custom among the Evangelicals in common with the Methodists to keep a diary, a record of their experiences in Christian life, and a mark of excessive subjectivity, as "the glass in which they every day dressed their minds."

The well-known Hester Ann Roe kept such a journal. There is an apparent exception in the case of David Simpson, as none of his seem to be extant; perhaps like Charles Simeon he had little taste for them. To a reader of their letters it must be evident that in several ways they differed from the ordinary type of men. They ran contrary to what was the usual vogue.

PLURALITIES

They were very outspoken against pluralities and non-residence, Adam and Lady Huntingdon especially.

FELLOW HELPERS IN CHRIST JESUS

Another pleasing feature was the attentive care with which they treated their servants, many of whom are mentioned in appreciative terms in diaries and letters, e.g. Newton, Scott, Venn,[1] Simpson,[2] etc. In the case

[1] Life, p. 143, and The History of Ruth Clark (passim).

[2] Original MSS. Venn to Simpson,

of Newton there are a hundred letters extant written by him to them. "I am particularly favoured," says he, "in my servants. It is a great comfort to be served by those who love us . . . when parlour and kitchen are in unison." "Being treated like children, they grew old in his service."[1]

PRAYER

In 1756 a weekly hour of prayer was agreed upon by several religious clergy and laity at which they mentioned the names in a "Clerical Litany" of their friends. To this circle Simpson belonged until his death. Romaine, Venn, in fact nearly all the Evangelical leaders, were members. It was not until 1783 that the Eclectic Society, which held its meeting of London clergy and a few of the laity in the vestry of St John's, Bedford Row, was formed. In various parts of the country there were gatherings of Evangelicals,clergy and laity, though they were compared by Wesley to a "rope of sand."[2] These were in days when the great religious Societies, the Church Missionary Society, the Church Pastoral Aid Society, and kindred institutions had not been founded. The meetings therefore supplied a want and formed a bond of union between the Evangelicals.

The supply of fit persons for Holy Orders was not neglected. By the starting of the Elland Society (among its members were Henry Kirke White, the poet, and Samuel Marsden the great New Zealand Missionary) in which Simpson's friends in Yorkshire, an Evangelical preserve, took a prominent part, candidates were sent to the Universities. At Cambridge, both Farish and

[1] Life, v. i. p. 70.

[2] Wesley, Curnock, v. 63.

Jowett together with Simeon were able representatives of the Revival. In those days there were no Church Theological Colleges.

Nor was it the case that the blessing was confined to their own Church. Carey, the great Baptist missionary, owed much to Scott. "If there be anything of the Word of God in my soul, I owe it to Scott's preaching when I first set out in the way of the Lord."[1] Robinson (Leicester) also he thanks for allowing him to be his companion when visiting his flock.[2] John Goode, Simpson's spiritual son, became Minister of White's Row Chapel, Spitalfields. Even the Roman Catholics reaped benefit from the Evangelicals. Newman confessed that Scott, as the writer of the "Force of Truth," made a deeper impression on his mind than any other:—"To whom, humanly speaking, I owe my soul."[3] Manning looked upon Miss Bevan, authoress of "Line upon Line," "Peep of Day," etc., as his "spiritual Mother." In later life he describes the Evangelicals as those "whose lives were singularly conformed to the Catholic type of humility, patience, piety, submission, self-denial and communion with God."[4]

EVANGELICALS AND THOSE OUTSIDE THE MASSES

It was often their care to minister to certain classes: hence services for the young, women and others, especially in connection with Clubs.

[1] Life (Walker,) p. 41. [2] Life (Carey), p. 361. [3] 'Apology,' cap i.
[4] Gasquet, Manning, p. 8. (1895). E

PIETY AT HOME

Many of them kept a school, e.g. Milner, Atkinson, Simpson, etc.

They had a firm belief in the power of intercessory prayer. Hence it was that they regarded Family Worship as all important. To it they often invited their parishioners, e.g. at Aston Vicarage. The singing of a Hymn or Psalm was a marked feature.

"HE LEADETH ME"

As did Whitefield and the Wesleys, so they firmly believed in a particular Providence. Newton looked upon every knock on his study door as a message from God. It is thus, too, he writes :—"The way of man is not in himself, nor can he perceive what belongs to a single step. When I go to preach at St. Mary Woolnoth, it seems the same whether I turn down Lothbury or go through the Old Jewry ; but the going through one street and not another may produce an effect of lasting consequences." "Hence," says Sydney Smith, "a great deal of error and a great deal of secret misery."[1]

[1] Works p. 97.

STUDY OF PROPHECY

Another characteristic was their readiness to give a prominence to the study of prophecy, though it brought them into disrepute. It, however, was a subject upon which, it must be confessed, their views led them to dogmatise too freely. The French Revolution gave scope for their speculations, an opportunity embraced by others beside themselves, e.g., Bishop Horsley, who certainly would not have claimed to have been one of them, did not hesitate to style Napoleon " a vile Corsican in whom some saw Anti-Christ."

It is interesting to read what a Nonconformist has to say of them (Dr. Dale). To them he attributes " the extinction of that solicitude for an ideal Church organisation which had so large a place in the original revolt of the Nonconformists against the Elizabethan settlement of the English Church. . . . It cared nothing for the idea of the Church as the august society of Saints."

" Among ourselves the idea of the Church was almost swept away by the vehement tide of the Evangelical Movement."[1]

SUNDAY SCHOOLS
" Feed My Lambs "

In the Evangelicals, both Clerical and laity, it need hardly be said Sunday Schools, when opposed by the clergy at large, found active supporters. Yet there

[1] Evangelical Revival, p. 31.

was not wanting a certain apprehension as to the course of this new effort. Even Bishop Horsley thought that they might be a danger if used for political purposes.

In some quarters there was a tendency to employ them chiefly for reading and writing and a neglect of the main object—the spiritual teaching of the child. Raikes never claimed to be the founder of such Institutions. But he was certainly the man who popularized them, and it should be noted that he was a Churchman.

FOREIGN MISSIONS

"Come over and help us"

Many of the party were profoundly dissatisfied with what was being done for the conversion of the heathen. The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge was busily engaged, but their field of operation was the colonies only. The London Missionary Society, already started, was a Dissenting and Congregational Institution. It was felt that any new outlet for the activities of the Evangelicals to engage in Missionary work in heathen lands should be a distinctly Church Society, but not on High Church principles. It had long suggested itself, and it was now to take a more definite form. It became crystallized in the practical suggestion made in the house of Simpson's friend, the Rev. R. Pugh, of Rauceby, in 1795. It was again brought forward in still more distinct outline at a meeting of the Eclectic Society in 1797. It finally resulted in the establishment of the Church Missionary Society in 1797. Space will not allow us here to enlarge upon the glorious work which that Society has been, under God, permitted

to accomplish, and is still accomplishing, for the salvation of mankind.

It was a letter from Newton to the Chaplain for the first British settlement in Australia which led to the foundation of the Church : it was Wilberforce's influence with Pitt which prompted him to send a Chaplain.

THE JEWS

"THEY SHALL PROSPER THAT LOVE THEE"

The conversion of the Jews was also a subject in which they took a keen interest, holding, as they did, that GOD's own people, when brought to Christ, would prove the best Missionaries to the heathen world.

In a word it may be said that they formed Societies rather than Parties.

EVANGELICALS AND THE WORLD

THE STAGE

Against the Stage they had a deeply rooted aversion, for in spite of the efforts of Garrick to purify it, there remained much which was calculated to bring it into bad repute. It concerned itself with manners rather than morals. They objected to the indecent innuendoes, the unbecoming postures, and, above all, to the class of women who frequented the plays. A most remarkable broad sheet is extant which Simpson published in view of the erection of a theatre in Macclesfield. To quote it *in extenso* would occupy too much space. Suffice it to say that in the most lurid terms it describes the

frequenters as on the way to Hell, the pit of the building being synonymous with the Pit of Hell, etc. Novels, also, fell under their ban.

"MY DAY"

Their strict observance of the Lord's Day gave their opponents an opportunity to ridicule. They were charged with Jewish *Sabbatism* and *Pharisaism*, though the critic was compelled to add "with them the First Day of the week was not a weariness to be shortened as much as possible by lying in bed late in the morning,[1] and retiring early at night, but the occasion of real and great spiritual enjoyment and communion with God over and above what they had on other days." To take one sketch only from a letter written by a son after his father's death (Rev. D. Simpson): "Sunday was not an idle day—there was nothing wearisome about it. Church Service at 10.30, afternoon at 2.30, Wesleyan Chapel at 5.30 which my mother and I, or both sisters and servants, attended. When my father was well enough he frequently went and sat in the most conspicuous place in the front gallery belonging to Mr. Ryle's family. . . . On Sunday night we were always prepared with a portion of Greek Testament and the Hebrew Psalter, after which all the family assembled and listened with great interest to the address: I presided at the harpsichord. . . . At that time the Wesleyans had Service at 7 on Sunday mornings and in the evening: the Preachers and their flock generally attended my father's ministry." He does not state here, what we learn from another source, that Mrs. Simp-

[1] Proby, i, 256.

son had also a class for her own children and those of her neighbours.

MORE DEFINITE CHURCHMANSHIP

Time brought its changes in the attitude of the party toward Nonconformity. Jones writes of the Clergy attending the meeting at Creaton : " It was the general voice without one exception that they ought to make a point of being more regular than ever in the present day."[1]

Simeon was not " satisfied that Berridge was doing right in preaching from place to place."[2] They were, says a Methodist historian, " stricter Churchmen than their Methodist predecessors and most of their descendents have forgotten their Methodist antecedents in a still stricter Churchmanship."[3]

A letter from Venn is important as showing his views on the vexed question of " irregularity ". He had left Huddersfield for the country village of Yelling near Cambridge, and was thus in touch with Berridge, an old College friend and great offender in the matter, with Simeon, too, of the younger generation representing a more decided stamp of Churchmanship.

" You ask how I justify my irregularity and whether I have no enemies ? I will tell you. No person in the kingdom loves more and admires our Liturgy than I do, so that I would not be a Dissenter upon any account. Besides in the congregation I much prefer a form of prayer to free prayer, as it is called by way of distinction.

[1] Life, p. 119. [2] Carter, 18th Century, p. 93.
[3] Stevens, Methodism, ii. p. 82.

I am also a great friend to regularity for this reason. I was near fifty before I preached in other parishes out of the Church, but after very much exercising in my mind the matter, came to the conclusion that where an ignorance almost pagan prevails and the Church is deserted, so that few worship there and the teaching is against Christ, regularity must be given up. Accordingly as my bodily strength enables me, I do preach at two large parishes in my neighbourhood. It excites in many very violent resentment and they threaten, but, GOD being my helper, as I think it right, I shall not desist. Good is done, some souls are turned from Satan to GOD."[1]

The best comment on the above may be found in his son's words : " Influenced by the hope of doing good, my father, in certain instances, preached in unconsecrated places. But having acknowledged this, it becomes my pleasing duty to state, that he was no advocate for irregularity in others ; that when he afterwards considered it, in its distant bearings and connections, he lamented that he had given way to it, and restrained several other persons from such acts by the most cogent arguments ; and that he lived long enough to observe the evils of schism so strongly, that they far outweighed in his mind the present apparent good."[2]

As time went on the distance separating the Evangelicals and Methodists became greater, till in the year 1796 Venn writes to his son : " I am not displeased with the opposition of the Huntingtonians to your preaching. Their hatred is much to be preferred to their praise."[3]

[1] MSS. [2] Life, 177. [3] Life, p. 530.

SOCIAL REFORM, Etc.

"They that fight for Freedom, undertake
The noblest cause mankind can have at stake,
Religion, Virtue, Truth, whate'er we call
A blessing—Freedom is the pledge of all."
—*Cowper.*

"MEMBERS ONE OF ANOTHER"

The laity were not wanting in a zeal for social reform. The greatest efforts which were begun, if not completed, in the century were owing to their inspiration. They grasped the humanitarian feeling in the air.

It was a well-known group of Evangelical laymen that determined to wage the memorable but well-nigh hopeless, warfare against slavery, backed up as it was by great and powerful vested interests. The Revival may be said to have assumed a new phase, marking another step in its progress.

To understand how rooted in the English mind the system was, may be seen from the words of Whitefield: "Whether it be lawful for a Christian to buy slaves, I shall not take upon me to determine."[1] and the action of Lady Huntingdon in accepting those bequeathed to her by him without demur, even stipulating that one of them should bear her name.[1] It was "commonly considered by the most respectable people as an innocent and beneficial traffic."

[1] Life and Times, p. 264.

WILBERFORCE

What furnished the motive power for the untiring efforts of Wilberforce, Clarkson, and others, but their Evangelical convictions?

They transformed the whole face of English Society. It was to a great extent owing to their missionary and philanthropic work that the spread of socialistic and revolutionary ideas was averted. The best known was William Wilberforce, like Simpson, a member of St. John's College, Cambridge, whose character has been summed up in the sentence," an incomparable readiness to give pleasure and to be pleased." His " Practical View " was widely read, and attacked by Gilbert Wakefield.

CLARKSON, THE " MORAL STEAM ENGINE "

Still the claims of another Johnian, Thomas Clarkson, a fellow apostle of the great forward movement, who travelled more than 35,000 miles to get information and arouse interest, must not be passed over. He was an open-minded but staunch Churchman, a son of the the manse, called by Coleridge " the moral steam engine," " the giant with one idea." He proved himself the successful candidate for a University prize on the subject as to whether it was right to enslave a man against his will. Almost in despair, owing to the shortness of the time allowed, he happened to find a copy of Antony Benezet's " Account of Guinea " in a friend's rooms : he read it, was moved with compassion and was enabled to write with power and effect.

EVANGELICAL CLERGY AND CLUBS

Nor were the Evangelical Clergy behind in the good work. Social reforms were not neglected, witness the elaborate scheme of Haweis for the starting of compulsory Clubs or, what is more akin to our subject, the Female Societies that Simpson founded in Macclesfield. What all the rules were, cannot exactly be said, but a study of the sermon preached before the members at the Annual Feasts will enable us to hazard a shrewd guess. Those of a Cumberland Society shew that there was a real danger lest some of the members should indulge in undue loquacity, either in divulging Club secrets to the public, or in the conduct of their proceedings when in meeting assembled. In the Macclesfield Women's Club an admission fee of 2/- was paid, the monthly subscription being 7d. with a levy of 1/6d. when a member was married, and 1/- for the Annual Dinner. The benefits were 3/6 a week sick pay. If payment had been kept up for twenty-five years, an Old Age Pension of 1/6 at sixty, whether able or not to work.[1]

Has justice been done to William Grimshaw the pioneer Evangelical?

GRIMSHAW "THE MAD PARSON"

Ordained with no sense of the responsibility of his high office, he became a few months later (1731) curate of Todmorden, Yorkshire. Here he was gradually led

[1] MSS. Sermon.

into the light, the process being hastened by his wife's death, 1739. His eyes were opened to see a new beauty in the Bible. "If GOD had drawn up His Bible into Heaven, and sent down another, it could not have been newer to him."[1] He led a strenuous life; itinerated far and wide, riding on his scrub pony over bleak moors and fells. Of him Wesley wrote: "A few such as he would make a nation tremble; he carries fire wherever he goes."[2] We can picture him to ourselves the "Evangelical Archbishop of York"; broadset and strong, with his horn spectacles, loud in voice, impulsive, excitable, witty, courteous, eloquent, open as day. In his Haworth parsonage (now a farmhouse on the edge of the moor) ,meetings were often held in the large kitchen, an apartment also in requisition for hospitable purposes when Whitefield, Wesley, and any of the Evangelical fathers were staying there. The church congregations were very large. The communicants numbered so many that on special occasions thirty-five bottles of wine were used; some six thousand people crowded into the churchyard. Nor was parochial visitation neglected. He mapped out the village into sections, each of which saw him regularly. He baptized as many as 125 children in his church in one year. (It must however be said that parents from surrounding parishes often brought their children.) He preached sermons two hours long, repeating his arguments in different ways. In the course of his aggressive ministry he soon became acquainted with mob violence. He was pelted with mud and stones: attacks upon his person were frequent. Strange was the tale he could tell of how he had been set upon with bludgeons brandished over his head. He was dragged through the streets

[1] Ryle, Christian Leaders, p. 111.

[2] Wesley (Curnock, 1899), iv, p. 493.

of Colne by a set of ruffians egged on by an angry parson. There was method in the madness of "mad Grimshaw," an ever-burning zeal for souls. His love for the Prayer Book was shown by his reading the daily Lessons and Psalms at Family Prayers, to which his parishioners were invited. The Sacred Name he always spelt in capital letters.

In the days of clerical laxity his energy naturally caused heart-burning which led to opposition. Active complaints were laid against him before his bishop; on one occasion he feared suspension. But such efforts were overruled. He was able to carry on the good work until a fever, caught while visiting his parishioners, carried him off, at the age of fifty-four.

Tradition is eloquent concerning his peculiarities. It is said that once he set his congregation to sing the 119th Psalm while he sallied forth, whip in hand, into the village and literally compelled loiterers to come in. But though *fortiter in re* he could be *suaviter in modo*. He was known to be a great peacemaker, and, above all, a man of intense humility. He died prematurely old. "Here goes an unworthy servant" was one of his last utterances. A man who preached at the rate of twenty or thirty sermons a week, and raised the number of his communicants from twelve to over a thousand, must surely be ranked as an extraordinary person.

JOHN BERRIDGE, "THE WIT"

It was with John Berridge that Simpson came most in contact, his adviser in college days. It was to him

that he turned in the dark hour of his Macclesfield difficulties. For young men he had a special love. The sparkling wit that had made him exceedingly popular in his University career stood him in good stead in his dealings with his fellow-students. This innate drollery, at times almost too prominent, never detracted from the sterling honesty of his character. He was alike to all; not afraid to speak his mind to Lady Huntingdon, whose trusty chaplain he was. A proof of his self-denying labours may be seen in an extract from a letter to her in which he speaks of "miry roads in sharp weather; rise at five in the morning to preach at seven; breakfast on tea that smells very sickly; at eight to mount a horse with boots never cleaned and then ride home praising GOD for all mercies, coarse food and meagre liquor; lumpy beds to lie on, and too short for the feet; stiff blankets like boards for a covering; and live cattle in plenty to feed on you."[1]

For him Cowper, though by no means lavish of praise, witness his criticism of Scott—had a high regard as a preacher. The motto on his study clock shews his diligence:

"Here my master bids me stand,
And mark the time with faithful hand.
What is his will is my delight,
To tell the hours by day and night.
Master, be wise and learn of me,
To serve thy GOD as I do thee."

His self-composed epitaph bears witness to his object in life:—"An itinerant servant who loved his Master and His work, and after running on His errands many years was called up to wait on Him above."

[1] Whittingham, p. 503.

ROMAINE, "THE SCHOLAR"

The following unpublished letter throws an unusual light on the life of one who ranks as another Evangelical pioneer, William Romaine. A scholar *par excellence*, rather stiff, and even pedantic, a preacher grave and decorous, essentially holy but reserved, he was looked upon as a dour man: a diamond rough, but pointed. Certainly he did not carry his heart on his sleeve. It will thus be news to many to read how he could unbend at times:—

"My Good Friend,

We do not forget, but game has been very scarce with us since we came home—only one hare, and that had been run down at Durham, and then came to us not quite fit to take another journey. We have met with a brace of partridges which crave your acceptance. And I hope it will not offend you that they come down franked; moreover they are very sweet. To-morrow, when you pick the bones, then remember the giver. I have no tidings yet of Captain Dixon. As long as this very fine November lasts we do not wish to see you. Enjoy it at home. London is good enough for bad weather. This is the fifteenth day of clear sky and delightful sunshine for which I am most heartily thankful. When the rains return, and you may resolve to visit us, I wish you could contrive to bring me one or two of Mr. Kitty's flat cakes, such as I saw in his shop with currants in them, and made to be cut into half-penny slices, one of which I ate at Oakingham. Or, if convenience offers, send one to Mr. Thatcher directed to me. Tho' we do not wish to see you it is for your own good; for I can assure you, for these three days past there

have been very strong suspicions entertained and spoken out, too. "I am afraid they are not well, perhaps Mrs. Talbot is dead . . . poor Sally" truth . . . well, however here is the corall for her, little dear!" One line would make our dinner relish better if it was only just to inform us. We are as you left us. Will you thank Mrs. Tudor for her Pig?—excellent it was, and the celery and endive with it very fine. Remember us to Mrs. R. with all due respect. We honour and often take her to our court, and get our King to smile upon her. May He bless the babes.

"For Thursday morning a long letter, Farewell and pray for W. and Mr. R. Nov. 17 (1730)."[1]

At times he grew despondent while fighting what seemed a losing battle. "I can see nothing before me, so long as the breath is in my body, but war and that with unreasonable men, a divided parish, an angry Clergy, a wicked Sodom and a wicked world—all to be resisted and overcome," so he writes on one such occasion.[2]

Among many who owed their soul's salvation to him was Thomas Bliss who, when a lad (sixteen) at Oxford was exasperated by his sermon, but on finding that Haweis preached the same doctrines was finally drawn to admit their truth (1742-1802). So, too, Captain Scott, the well known Soldier-Evangelist.

HENRY VENN, "THE YORKSHIRE EVANGELIST"

Next in order comes one better known, both for his own work in Yorkshire, and as the father and grandfather of two great supporters of the Church Missionary Society, Henry Venn.

[1] MSS. [2] Life, p. 152 (Cadogan).

Fuller particulars may be gleaned from a history of the Venn family, compiled by the late Dr. Venn whose loss Cambridge laments. Enough to say that it will be long before he is forgotten by Huddersfield. He won the hearts of the sturdy Yorkshire mechanics. His church was thronged with worshippers who came from miles round. His letters shew that he was a man of sound judgment as may also be seen by his advice to Simpson. Of a cheery disposition, ardent faith, and burning zeal he well merited the enconium of Cowper, "I have seen few men whom I could have loved more, had opportunity been given me to know him better; so at least I have thought as often as I have seen him."[1] His line of action after the Spa Fields Judgment was an instance of the growing feeling that a more decided Churchmanship was demanded by the times. He severed his connection with Lady Huntingdon; at the same time his friendship with her and the Wesleys remained unbroken. When owing to failing health he moved to the country living of Yelling he continued his good work until the last. His sympathetic dealings and wise advice proved a tower of strength to the Revival in the neighbouring University of Cambridge, where his son was in residence. The undergraduates always received a hearty welcome at his rectory. Berridge, as a near neighbour and friend, was able to help him in his good work. It should be mentioned that among those who owed their conversion to Henry Venn was Walter Shirley. At the top of every sermon he composed it is said that he wrote in Greek "Glory to God: mercy to me a sinner."[2]

[1] Life, p. 148.

[2] Ibid., p. 368.

"THE FIELD PREACHER"

George Whitefield (of whom Cowper wrote:

> ("Beneath well sounding Greek
> I slur a name a poet must not speak."
> Leuconomus stood pilloried on Infamy's high stage")

came in for the greater share of ridicule. His Calvinistic views, owing to their abuse by some of his nominal followers, lent themselves to the purpose rather than those of Wesley. From many of the bishops he met with opposition, though Benson (Bristol), who ordained him, asked, when dying, for his prayers, sending him ten guineas for his work; while Barnard (Derry) who at times attended his ministry, ordained his first ministerial Methodist Preacher.

"What victory would Satan gain if he could put an end to field preaching," cried Wesley, who had followed his example—the master had become the disciple.

He loved a "commodious room, a soft cushion and a handsome pulpit," but was willing to trample them under foot if by so doing he could save but one soul. His motto was to preach, as Apelles painted, for eternity.

THE SLAVE AND THE PREACHER

John Newton, according to Lecky, was one of the most devoted and single-hearted" of the Party, one

of the purest and most unselfish of saints—[1] "a strong-minded man" as Southey terms him. In him we can read a tale of romance. His father was captain of a merchantman, his mother a Nonconformist, whose early death left her son exposed to the many temptatations to which an excitable temperament made him peculiarly liable. From being a drunken, swearing sailor, a dare-devil and scapegrace, a dealer in African slaves, and a Liverpool tide-surveyor, he became a pious curate-in-charge of a Buckinghamshire town parish (Olney) for fifteen years, and rector of an important London City benefice—St. Mary, Woolnoth, for some twenty-seven. He was also the writer of a Church History, many soul-stirring hymns in the Olney collection, and spiritual letters. For young men he had a special liking. From his diary we learn how much he felt the treatment which Simpson met with in the Buckingham curacy which he had obtained for him.

Newton was respected by all, consulted by many, and the spiritual father of not a few. The Nestor of the Revival, he was ripe in judgment, with shrewd commonsense and spiritual insight into character, conciliating and compassionate, "no controversialist."

It has been said that Newton's religious contact with Cowper was a cause of the poet's occasional attacks of depression, and that he was responsible for his outbreaks of insanity. But this may be easily countered by the fact that the first illness took place before there was any intercourse between the two men; it ran in the blood.

Newton was a tender-hearted man with an intense love for his wife to whom he owed everything. It was the prospect of marriage with her that in the days of his unbounding wildness kept him from making ship-

[1] Jay, Autobiography, p. 283.

wreck of his soul. It was of her he wrote: "In the place of GOD, how can I write it?[1] When my wife died the world seemed to die with her."

His letters, we may add, will well repay the reader. They are manly, terse and plain: in some respects they will bear comparison with those of "his most dear and intimate friend" as he styles him—William Cowper.[2]

'BIBLE' SCOTT

THOMAS SCOTT, as a schoolfellow of Simpson, but more as the author of a Bible Commentary, and a leading member of the party, claims a longer notice. The son of a Lincolnshire farmer at Bratoft he toiled on as an ordinary labourer before his ordination. He was strictly brought up by his father, a Socinian, who passed away in 1774, a year which also marked the death of his mother. On his 34th birthday he wrote that he had lived "without GOD" for nearly 28 years. He was ordained deacon by the Bishop of Lincoln in 1778 and priest six months after, with Pentycross, whose funeral sermon he afterwards preached. When admitted to priest's orders he was licensed to the curacy of Stoke Goldington, Bucks, a parish not far from Olney, where Newton was curate-in-charge, hence his acquaintance with him, a fact to which he mainly owed his conversion. The conviction that their views on sin and the Judgment were defective in making light of those stupendous realities, led him to leave the Socinians and to become an Arian. From this latter error he was gradually brought out, one step being the death of two of his parishioners who, on his neglecting to visit them, had been attended

[1] More, H. Life (Roberts), ii. 238.

[2] Letter to W. C. Unwin, May 5th, 1783.

by Newton. The perusal of Burnet's "Own Times"[1] in which he mentions the dangers of a prayerless ministry, spoke to his conscience. A long correspondence with Newton, commenced in 1775, but broken off for a season, ensued; it did not actually then lead to his conversion, but certainly had the tendency to make him think more seriously. His ministry at Olney where he succeeded Newton was not altogether a happy one. He makes more use, said Cowper, "of the knife than the poultice."[2] "No man was ever scolded out of his sins."[3] He had the reputation for scolding the people, the fact was that many of them had strong Antinomian views, coupled with a careless life. Cowper, who knew him well, said "he had the best intentions, but his natural temper was rather positive than gentle. He could not see both sides of the shield."[4] (He had never heard Scott preach; nor had Mrs. Unwin.)

"THE LOCK"

It is, however, as Chaplain at the Lock Hospital, London, that he was better known, a place which figured largely in the annals of the Revival. It stood near Grosvenor Place. A conspicuous object of the interior was a large gallery screened off by a curtain. Here, unseen, lest the sight should offend the eye, sat an assembly of the unfortunate patients to hear the Word. The general congregation included persons of title and distinction—Lord and Lady Dartmouth, John Pearson, the well-known doctor, William Wilberforce, whose "Practical View of Christianity" created

[1] Conclusion, p. 638. (1734).

[2] Cowper, Letter to Newton, March 29th, 1784.

[3] Life of Charles (Jenkyns), i. p. 53.

[4] Cowper, Letter to Newton, March 29th, 1784.

so great a sensation, and others. It was a strange contrast—the lowest of the low, the poor outcasts of society—and the highly respectable Calvinists. The Lock Hospital itself has an interesting history. It owed its existence to the untiring zeal of Thomas Coram, a man of rugged integrity, an English-born ship-builder of Taunton, Massachusetts, who in spite of rebuffs had pleaded his cause before Royalty itself.

There were two preachers, one for the morning, the other for the evening. Madan the ex-lawyer was one, the popular C. De Coetlogon the other, both his predecessors. Here it was that Scott came to minister, vexing his righteous soul over the inconsistent lives of some of his hyper-Calvinistic hearers, thus bringing himself into opposition with them. His refusal to look upon the Pope of Rome as identical with Anti-Christ exposed him to the undeserved suspicion of being an Arminian and lost him half his people.

His Sunday was a strenuous one. Called by the watchman at four a.m. he walked to take a morning service at six—a congregation of some two or three hundred with Holy Communion after, then home for a short time, before starting again for another service, followed by a third in the afternoon, and a fourth in the evening, arriving late home for Family Prayers (no means short), fourteen miles walking in all.

As a preacher Scott never quite overcame a certain broadness of pronunciation. He was a little brusque in his bearing, and had by nature a quick temper that he strove to overcome. He had a humble heart—"Let me be an errand-boy for Christ if I can be nothing more," was the motto he tried to live out.[1] He closed his days as the Rector of Aston Sandford, a quiet little village

[1] Life (J. Scott, 1823), p. 229.

in Buckinghamshire, ever an earnest labourer for the Lord he had sought, and found, and loved. The story of his after-days does not fall within the scope of this book.

THE CONTROVERSIALIST

As to Augustus Montague Toplady it is only necessary to add to other references (pp. 12,58) the following details. Owing to his precarious health, he was but thirty-seven at his death,about the same age as the Moravian hymn-writer, Cennick, he removed from Devonshire to Orange Street Chapel, London, where he preached, as "a dying man to dying men," what was deemed to be a highly Calvinistic doctrine, being helped at times by Shirley and others of similar views.

THE ST. JOHN OF THE REVIVAL

John William Fletcher, De la Fletchière, to give him his Swiss name, "a Swiss mountaineer," so he terms himself the St. John of the Revival—seemed to have "brought heaven to earth." Differing from the other pioneers in theological views—he was an Arminian—he was beloved by both parties. Truly did he dwell in "heavenly places." Possessed of a fund of good commonsense he acted as a mediator in the crisis that had arisen

between the two wings of the Methodist Movement. Of him Wesley writes—"so unblamable a character in every respect, I have not found either in Europe or America, nor do I expect to find another such on this side eternity."[1] Venn says: "I do assure you I strictly observed him for six weeks, and never heard him speak anything but what was becoming a pastor of Christ's Church, not a single unbecoming word of himself, or of his antagonists, or of his friends."[2]

"THE CHRISTIAN MECAENAS"

Turning now to some of the important of the Evangelical laity with whom Simpson was brought into contact, we see JOHN THORNTON. A prince of Russia merchants, his purse was ever open to the requests for any worthy object. From him Newton received a large sum each year to enable him to carry on the Olney work; he founded the Thornton trust. A prominent member of the Clapham Sect, he also acted as a mediator between the two bodies of the Methodists. Of him the poet Cowper wrote

> 'Thou hast an industry in doing good,
> Restless as he who toils and sweats for food."[3]

To his wife, who shared in his religious views and proved an efficient helpmeet, he could point as one who declared that she never heard a sermon without deriving from it some benefit.

[1] Tyerman, p. 94. [2] Life, p. 240. [3] Thornton, Sonnet.

THE SWEET SINGER

William Cowper, "the gentle recluse" of Olney, was a child of the Revival, and its sweet singer. His name will survive as a household word. His life history was a tragic one, whether in a London law-chamber or secluded in a quiet country town, struggling manfully against the dark spirit of melancholy. Such is its stirring pathetic interest that it is to be regretted that only a few words can here be added in his memory. An hitherto unpublished letter from Simpson is of no little importance, coming as it does from one who knew him (preface). If Charles Wesley was the poet of Methodism, William Cowper was that of the great Evangelical Revival.

"Mr. Cowper is living as a bachelor at Olney, in Buckinghamshire, where I once had the pleasure of visiting him. Mrs. Unwin and he have lived together many years, more like man and wife than friends, but, I believe, with piety and innocence. Miss Unwin is married. Mr. Cowper has had a return of his head complaint some two or three years ago, owing to his grief for the death of Mr. Unwin, with whom, you may recollect, I was Curate. Mr. Cowper's first derangement was occasioned by a love affair with the kept mistress of Lord Thurlow. Cowper has always been, according to my information, a man of honour.

"For many years he was a religious character, but now makes no profession, neither attends any means, if I am rightly informed of this I suspect the truth." (June 11th, 1793).

The reason assigned for Cowper's first attack is not that usually accepted. Though enlivened by the company of his recently discovered relation "Johnny

of Norfolk," he was fast sinking into a distressing state, accentuated by his "poor Mary's infirm condition."

The last paragraph of the letter needs explanation. The Cowper of 1793, a wreck of his former self, would in the eyes of an Evangelical seem to have sadly deteriorated from the Cowper of early Olney days, who, with the encouragement of Newton, "a little odd-looking man of the Methodistical order," as a rigid Churchman describes him, took part in the public Prayer Meetings in the Great House, but now, for some years, had given up attendance at Church and even refrained from standing up at meal times when "Grace" was said, under the deluded notion that GOD had forsaken him and that he had no right to pray.

Coupled with this would be the suspicion that his fame as a poet had brought the former recluse more into society, and introduced him to another and broader circle. This is quite enough to account for the somewhat cool appreciation that seems to lurk beneath the surface of the letter.

Simpson's visit to Olney lived long in his memory The pensive but playful poet, the gentle lady of the house, listening with courteous grace to the interchange of thought between the two men, while deftly working the bobbin-winder on the chair beside her. What, however, mostly struck him was that Cowper did not stand when "grace" was said, or take part in any religious observance.

Southey wrote of "The Task" that it was "more popular than any other poem of equal length in the English language."[1]

This verdict may be disputed, but it will be granted

[1] Life, p. 240.

that it was Cowper who, by voicing the thoughts uppermost in the minds of many, played a most important part in spreading the influence of Gospel truth. May it not be said that GOD raised him up for this very purpose; though in His providence he was at times bereft of reason, his writings are read to-day with pleasure and profit, while more pretentious efforts have perished in obscurity. Another assertion of Southey will meet with more approval, that he was the best of English letter-writers. Certain it is that written as they are with charming simplicity, grave mixed with gay, in plain nervous English, they will never be out of date.

THE EARL WHO PRAYED

Another layman who played an important part in the American War, Lord Dartmouth, was a leading member of the party. He "wore a coronet and prayed." Even so good a man and conscientious a statesman did not escape the tongues of calumny. The mention of his name in a disparaging tone drew from George III, an able ally, the crushing rejoinder:—"My Lord Dartmouth an enthusiast! But surely he says nothing on the subject of religion but what any Christian may and ought to say." It was through his influence that Newton was ordained, and Venn presented to Huddersfield. He was a great friend of Lady Huntingdon, to whom he owed his conversion; he threw the ægis of his support over Whitefield, was a school-fellow of Cowper at Westminister, and the means of Newton's appointment as curate of Olney, "The Evangelical Mecca."

"HOLY HANNAH"

The charge made against Evangelicals of blindness to the importance of literature does not hold good of HANNAH MORE, one of the women who took part in the Revival, and a notable exponent of the "Clapham Sect." She describes herself as " buried at Cheddar, a wretched obscure village in the lower part of Somersetshire . . . romantic in scenery, of which it may be said only man is vile." She was an able champion of the slave. Among her friends she numbered many of the bishops including Porteus, Newton, Horne, Lowth. She knew Garrick, Johnson, and Burke ; and ladies of the " Blue Stocking," Lady Mary Wortley Montagu and Mrs. Carter She freely mixed and companied with the highest classes of society, both social and literary. She made no secret of her religious opinions, but was able to bear witness to her Saviour. Of one friend she says," though I took the opportunity of saying things of a religious kind that perhaps she had never heard, she bore it better than any great person I ever conversed with."

A READY WRITER

In some parts she established schools for adults as well as for children, having first obtained leave from the Incumbent of the parish. She saw the danger of teaching the young to read unless some efforts were made to provide an antidote against the infidel literature of the day. Hence her tracts, which obtained so large a circulation. It is here worthy of note that she hardly ever produced one without drawing attention to some faith-

ful parish pastor. Her literary labours did much to stem the then rising tide of Socialism. "Village Politics: by William Carpenter," attained a circulation of two million copies in the first year. By her "Thoughts of the Importance of the Manners of the Great," and the sequel "Estimate of the Religion of the Fashionable World," she led a crusade (in which she was loyally backed up by Bishop Porteus) against Sunday desecration which abounded in the upper circles of society. Thus were all classes reached by her pen. While *in* the world she was *not of* the world.

TWO TRACTARIANS

"WE LIVE IN TABLOID DAYS."

David Simpson (1744-1799) intended by his father Ralph, a yeoman of Ingleby Arncliffe, Yorkshire, to become a farmer, was reading family prayers from the "Christian Monitor" when he claimed to have heard a voice saying "you must go and be instructed for the Ministry." Ralph at first objecting, at last gave way, and sent him to Scorton School in preparation for St. John's College, Cambridge. When an undergraduate he paid a visit to Theophilus Lindsey (not then a Unitarian) who found that at Cambridge he had no Bible. His words, followed as they were soon after by a demand from a highwayman for his "money, or his life," led him to think seriously, till at last one morning in his College rooms he definitely surrendered himself to God. A visit from his brother Collegian, Rowland Hill, with an invitation to join his "Methodist Club," introduced him to Christian work and though not willing to go the length in "irregularities" as some of the other members, he laid the foundation of a life long friendship with such men as W. C. Unwin (his future Rector) son of Cowper's "My Mary," Pentycross, Robinson (Leicester) and others. After two years of work at Stock, by the help of Newton he became Curate of Buckingham. Here his trials began: he was summoned before the Bishop as a "Methodist" and lost his licence. An offer of work

by Lady Huntingdon was declined in favour of the Curacy of Macclesfield. Here again he lost his licence on the same ground. Again, Lady Huntingdon approached him but in vain. He itinerated for several months, preaching on Sunday in the drawing-room of Macclesfield's benefactor and his patron, Charles Roe, until he built Christ Church for him. Opposition was made to its Consecration. Meanwhile the Incumbency of St. Michael's was offered and accepted by him. At once the opposition was intensified and for the third time in his life he was cited before a Bishop for "Methodism." On this occasion, however, wiser counsels prevailed and a concordat was reached, the conditions being, that, if he withdrew his acceptance, no more steps would be taken to prevent the Consecration. At Christ Church he laboured for twenty-four years, lived down all opposition and was spoken of as "the most popular man in Macclesfield." His Church was crowded, his labours untiring as a visitor.

He was the author of some thirteen works. A most industrious student, and a successful teacher, he introduced a Sunday School before Raikes drew public attention to the system; was one of the best known Cheshire Clergy, preached far and near, his services being much sought for. To his people he was lawyer, doctor ("Simpson's Pills" were in great request) "guide, philosopher and friend." Worn out by incessant work, weakened by successive paralytic strokes, saddened by the loss of his daughter and the illness of his wife (she died a few days before him) at the early age of fifty-four, he passed away, the immediate cause of death being a fever caught while visiting a parishioner.

He was very anxious that more use should be made of the Press. Such writings as those of Paine and Priestley, Price and Evanson must be met by means of

popular tracts as well as by the circulation of such works as Bishop Horne's "Duty of contending for the Faith," and "Trinity in Unity." Wolsey's reputed saying he made his own "if we do not destroy the Press, the Press will destroy us."

He criticises some of the existing tracts. "They are too well written; these *finished* things are not striking enough; a person must be content to forfeit some of his fame as an elegant writer, if he would be useful."

Perhaps the most remarkable of his tracts was that on the Stage (p.69). Others, e.g., "God speaking from Mount Gerizim," or, "The Gospel in a Map," would to-day be reckoned as heavy reading.

From Simpson to John Charles Ryle may seem a far cry, but is it so?

Seventy-two years later there was born in the outskirts of the same town the son of a rich banker, the M.P. for the borough. John Charles Ryle, intended by his father to follow his occupation and, if possible, his Parliamentary career, was destined to become the first Bishop of Liverpool and "the prince of Tract-writers."

How this was brought to pass can best be shown by his own words: "I was born in the good old town of Macclesfield, in the County of Cheshire, where my grandfather made a fortune and my father lost every penny of it. But had not my father lost it, I should not have been a Minister of Christ. I lived in Cheshire—a fine county—no county breeds better and taller men than Cheshire does. And the real Cheshire cheese is fine."

"My life has been a very curious one. I was not brought up for the Church. The last thing I should have expected up to the time I was twenty-five years of age was that I should ever be a clergyman. My father was a

wealthy man. He was a landed proprietor and a banker. I was the eldest son, and looked forward to inheriting a large fortune. I was on the point of entering Parliament. I had all these things before me till I was twenty-five; but it then pleased God to alter my prospects in life through my father's bankruptcy. The change was a very crushing one for the time. It did crush me very terribly, and for many years I could hardly lift up my head."

Between the two families there was the greatest friendship. For some twenty-five years they lived near one another in the same town. There was always a seat in Ryle's carriage on Sunday for Simpson and a place at their table on week-days, an invitation which he generally made use of, his son tells us on "washing days."

Yet again, they both were admirers of Wesley.

For Simpson's verdict (see p. 40).

And what was Ryle's testimony?

"I learned to respect him when I was only a boy; and I continue my feelings towards him at the age of eighty three."

Thus both Arminian and Calvinist united to do him honour.

It was the fateful walk to Church on Easter day, 1774, in company with Ryle, as Mayor (he was looked upon as a "Methodist") and John Wesley, which gave Simpson's enemies the opportunity they had long been seeking, of accusing him to the Bishop of favouring "Methodism," especially as they were able to prove that he often attended the Chapel on Sunday nights. Almost at the end of his Episcopate the late Bishop John Charles Ryle at his own expense recleaned and renovated the tablet erected in 1808 by the Trustees in Sunderland St. Wesleyan Chapel in memory of his

Grandfather. This fact is duly recorded on a small tablet placed below.

At Helmingham it was that he began his Suffolk career of thirty-six years.

His first tract, strictly so named, had a tragic origin. On May 9th, 1845 a terrible accident had taken place at Gt. Yarmouth. A large crowd of people had flocked to the newly constructed Suspension Bridge, attracted by a notice that Nelson, the clown from a Circus, would ride in a tub on the water drawn by four geese. Suddenly without warning, one of the rods snapped, then another. Next the chain on one side gave way: the bridge fell "like the leaf of a table let down" and a mass of people were seen struggling in the water, the number of deaths reaching a hundred.

The event caused great consternation throughout the Eastern Counties. Ryle grasped the opportunity and an anonymous tract by him was published by a London firm (Messrs Wertheim) who were represented at Ipswich. As a result a scheme was broached of an Evangelical Magazine to be edited by him.

This, however, pressure of work and his state of health ("I have not health and strength for it at present . . ." "entire inability for much continuous mental exertion") (letter of November 23, 1846)[1] prevented him from undertaking. At the same time he suggested a series of "Ipswich Tracts" "if his brethren in the Ministry would contribute their aid." Though the actual title was not adopted, and Ryle was the sole author, the result was a long series of Tracts followed by such works as "Expository Thoughts on the Gospels," (the volumes on St. John especially showing a wide range of study and no small literary acumen) which have for many years made the name of Ryle a household word.

[1] MSS.

Later (1861) a new Evangelical Magazine was started under the title of "the Christian Advocate and Review" the Editor being the Rev. R. H. Groome (his name does not appear on the title page till 1864) a neighbour and intimate friend during the thirty-two years of their Suffolk life—a man whose scholarly refinement was deservedly praised by Bradshaw the Cambridge librarian who remarked: "I never see Groome but what I learn something from him." His promotion to the Archdeaconry of Suffolk, the due recognition of merit, was amply justified by his work; an acceptable speaker in Convocation withal.

As editor he was supported by R. B. Girdlestone, T. T. Perowne; J. H. Titcombe, the Dean of Waterford; E. A. Litton E. H. Bickersteth; Gordon Calthrop, etc., (two of whom became Bishops and a third, an Archdeacon.)

Afterwards we find, beside Ryle, among the contributors such names as Sir Emilius Bayley; A. W. Thorold; H. B. Swete (Prof.); Law (Dean of Gloucester); Goode (Dean of Ripon); R. P. Smith (Dean of Canterbury), McNeile (Ripon); W. Saumarez Smith (Archbishop of Sydney), etc.

Though the tract above mentioned was his first public production, his pen had not been idle. Early in 1844, he was instituted on Feb. 14th to the Rectory of Helmingham—he had printed (tradition has it with his own hands) for private circulation copies of his first sermon which was published in 1854 under the title of "I Have Something to Say to Thee" in the third series of "Home Truths."

His tracts have had a very large circulation. They have been translated into many languages—French, German, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Swedish, Chinese, Japanese, Russian, Dutch, Norwegian, Danish; also

African and Indian, dialects, etc. Numerous instances of blessing could be cited. Two only can find a place here.

At the Swansea Church Congress (1879), Canon Knox Little paid them this generous tribute :

" I must confess I owe a great deal to him. I was a lad awakening to the deeper thoughts of spiritual things . . . groping in the dark for something to get hold of. It was one of those beautiful tracts that was my guide. I should respect and love him for the sake of that tract."

"The pleasantest and most useful reading I know on nearly all religious questions whatever are Ryle's tracts. They are not professedly doctrinal, but chiefly exhortative, the doctrine, however, comes in incidentally very pure and clear ," so writes Ruskin.

Ryle's first recorded public speech[1] while yet a layman in partnership with his father, with no thought of Ordination, was delivered when Macclesfield was passing through a crisis in its history. The Chartists were very active, so much so that the Cheshire Yeomanry were called out. (Ryle was an officer.)

The question of religious education, too, was much to the fore in Church circles, meetings being held at Macclesfield, Stockport,(where his father was appointed Treasurer for the neighbourhood), Congleton etc. Ryle's words were : ".It was well that when so many subjects local and political and so many questions were undergoing discussion the first occasion on which he addressed them should be on an object which was for the glory of God and the salvation of their souls."[2]

In Simpson's history Ryle took a deep interest, so much so that he at one time thought of writing a sketch of his life as one of " The Christian Leaders of the Last Century." Between the two men there was a similarity in several things. Each was a tract writer.

If it was the object of Simpson to avoid the love of

[1] *Macclesfield Courier* 27th April, 1839.

[2] See *Churchmen*, July, 1900.

fine writing and grand resonant phrasing "of the day," "to improve the people and those among the poor whose minds have happily taken a religious turn but who are able to purchase many books[1] it was equally so of Ryle.

Both were educationalists. Simpson gave proof of this by conducting a school. Ryle always advocated a better education for the lower middle classes and twenty-five years after as Vicar of Stradbroke, was able to secure a room in his Day School for children of farmers and tradesmen. Simpson had a "classical" School for boys and girls with an attendance of over one hundred and sixty in spite of the fact that in winter time they had to study early in the morning for an hour or two by candle light.

Both again, were lovers of the old Puritan theology (though Simpson owned allegiance to Wesley, Ryle to Whitefield). To both of them Evangelical religion "stood" as the Bishop of Chelmsford defines it to-day—is there not a continuity in Evangelical teaching?—"for simplicity in worship, for the doctrine of the Cross, the fact of the Atonement, and the need of conversion."[2]

In yet another point they resembled one another, love of God's Word. Ryle read through the whole Book and in his case Bible reading was no "kind of fetish work," once a year. One of his earlier tracts was "The reading which is blessed." Seven volumes formed a Commentary ("Expository Thoughts") on the Gospels. Simpson urged Bible study both "in season and out of season." In the "Christian Observer" (1799) will be found an article written at the request of the Editor and not published till after the author's death, in which he urges a regular and systematic reading. The subject was one which formed the constant theme of his sermons. Many instances are

[1] Sacred Literature, Introduction.

[2] *Church Quarterly Rev.*, p. 338,

at hand to prove that his exhortations were not in vain, e.g. that of a young man who went straight home from Church, knelt down upon his Bible and cursed the preacher, but in after life, when on his death bed, sent for him, told him his tale and sought his spiritual advice. In addition Simpson wrote four large volumes "showing the Holy Scriptures to be superior to the most celebrated writings of Antiquity by the testimony of above five hundred witnesses" commencing with the Early Christian Fathers—on their writings as "successors of the Apostles" he set a very high value to the authors of his own day.

As preachers too, they shared the gift of delivering their message in plain simple "market place" English. If Ryle could hold the attention of a number of farm labourers and their wives on a hot August afternoon——perhaps the best test of pulpit efficiency—Simpson could point to the crowd of nimble witted Macclesfield artificers who thronged Christ Church. That there were "signs following the Word" is simply to repeat a truism.

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